

INSPECTION REPORT

THE DOWNS CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL DEAL

LEA area: Kent

Unique Reference Number: 118684

Headteacher: Mrs W M Pilgrim

Reporting inspector: R E G Cross
15917

Dates of inspection: 11th October to 14th October 1999

Under OFSTED contract number: 707492

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

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Junior and infant
Type of control:	Voluntary Controlled
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Owen Square Walmer Deal Kent CT14 7TL
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body, The Downs CEP School
Name of Chair of Governors:	Rev. B Hawkins
Date of previous inspection:	February 1996

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Mrs H Griffiths, Lay Inspector		Equality of opportunity, Attendance, Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, Support, guidance and pupils' welfare, Partnership with parents and the community
Mrs H Ring	Science, Information technology	Curriculum and assessment, Staffing, accommodation and learning resources
Mrs J Worden	Mathematics, Design and technology	Children aged under five
Miss D Latham	Art, Music, Religious education	Special educational needs
Mrs R Johns	English, History	Attitudes, behaviour and personal development

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MAIN FINDINGS

What the school does well

- Children enter the school at average levels of attainment and leave it at above average levels.
- The school's ethos, its provision for the pupils' social and personal development, its provision for pupils with special educational needs and the quality of its relationships are all excellent.
- The school is very well managed.
- The quality of the pupils' behaviour, their attitudes to their work, the school's assessment procedures, its planning for progression in the pupils' learning, its extracurricular provision, the effectiveness of its implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies, the achievement of its aims and policies and its provision for the pupils' spiritual and moral development and their support, guidance and welfare are all very good.
- The parents are very well involved in their children's learning.
- The quality of teaching is good throughout the school and it is very good for pupils with special educational needs.

Where the school has weaknesses

- I. Some aspects of management are not sufficiently formalised. School development planning, although effective, does not, for example, cover a long enough period, induction procedures for the Headteacher designate are not formalised and the role of the senior management team is not clearly defined.
- II. Curricular provision for children aged under five has some weaknesses the area of physical development and management.

The weaknesses are heavily outweighed by the strengths but they will form the basis of the governors' action plan, which will be sent to all parents or guardians of pupils at the school

How the school has improved since the last inspection

The school has made a very good improvement since its previous OFSTED inspection. The key issues for action resulting from that inspection have been very well addressed in that a wide range of teaching styles is now evident in the school, the writing of curriculum policies and teaching schemes has been very well addressed, the role of co-ordinators has been developed effectively, assessment procedures are very good and assessment information is well used by teachers when they plan the pupils' work. In addition, standards of attainment, the quality of teaching, provision for pupils with special educational needs, provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and the range of extracurricular activities provided by the school have all improved significantly since the last inspection.

However, the school development plan is not as clearly structured as it was at that time, budget links to the plan are no better than they were then, the provision for pupils to appreciate the multicultural nature of British society is not as good as it was in February 1996 and the co-ordinators' monitoring does not regularly cover all subjects or focus sufficiently on standards. The school has a very good capacity to continue to improve.

Standards in subjects

This table shows the standards achieved by 11 year olds in 1998 based on the National Curriculum tests:

Performance in	Compared with all schools	Compared with similar schools	Key
			<i>Well above average</i> A
			<i>Above average</i> B
English	D	E	<i>Average</i> C
Mathematics	C	D	<i>Below average</i> D

Science

C

C

Well below average

E

The information shows that, compared with all schools, standards were average in mathematics and science and that they were below average in English. Compared with similar schools, standards were average in science, below average in mathematics and well below average in English. The school's provisional test results for 1999 show an improvement of between 11 and 28 percentage points in the number of pupils attaining the expected level or above in English, mathematics and science. Comparison of the school's end of Key Stage 2 results between 1996 and 1999 shows standards to be rising although there was a slight fall in 1998 because of the nature of the cohort of pupils in that year. The results of the school's end of Key Stage 1 tests and tasks for 1998 show that, compared with all schools, standards are well above average in reading and mathematics and above average in writing. Compared with similar schools, standards at Key Stage 1 are very high in reading, well above average in mathematics and above average in writing.

The findings of the inspection are that, at the end of both Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 1, standards are above average in English, mathematics and science. At both key stages, standards are above average in all other subjects except geography, where they are average and design and technology where they are average at Key Stage 1. On rare occasions, higher attaining pupils are not fully challenged. Children aged under five make good progress and, overall, attain above average standards by the age of five. Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress and attain good standards for their previous attainment.

Quality of teaching

Teaching in	Under 5	5 – 7 years	7 – 11 years
English	Good	Good	Good
Mathematics	Very good	Very good	Very Good
Science	N/A	Good	Good
Information technology	N/A	Good	Good
Religious education	N/A	Good	Good
Other subjects	Good	Good	Good

The quality of teaching is consistently good. There are no significant variations in the quality of teaching between classes, year groups or key stages. Overall, during the inspection, the teaching was excellent in 6 per cent of the lessons, very good in 27 per cent, good in 49 per cent and satisfactory in 18 per cent. The quality of teaching for pupils with special educational needs is very good.

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	Very good. The pupils move around the school in a very orderly manner, they settle down to lessons very quickly and are very self disciplined. No pupils have been excluded from the school in the last twelve months.
Attendance	Very good. The rate of attendance is above the national average and punctuality is very good.
Ethos*	Excellent. The school has a focused and effective commitment to high

standards. The pupils have very good attitudes to their work and the quality of relationships is excellent.

Leadership and management	Very good. The Headteacher gives very clear and firm leadership and members of staff with management responsibilities fulfil their roles effectively. The governors are well organised and committed to the school's best interests. The school's aims, values and policies are very well implemented. School development planning, although effective, does not cover a long enough period. Induction procedures for the Headteacher designate and the role of the senior management team are not clearly defined. The statutory information for parents lacks a small number of the details required.
Curriculum	Good. Curricular provision is broad, balanced and relevant. The school has established comprehensive policies for all subjects and has implemented effective schemes of work which help to ensure progression in the pupils' learning. Curricular provision for children aged under five has some weaknesses in the area of physical development. There are very good procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and assessment information is well used by teachers in their curricular planning. Provision for extracurricular activities is very good.
Pupils with special educational needs	Excellent. The provision is very well organised by the special educational needs co-ordinator. Communication between all of those involved in this provision is very effective and very well established. The pupils are very well supported and make good progress for their previous attainment.
Spiritual, moral, social & cultural development	Very good. Provision for social development is excellent. Pupils are given the opportunity to show initiative and to take responsibility. Provision for spiritual and moral development is very good and is well linked to the school's aims and values. Provision for cultural development is good although pupils are insufficiently encouraged to explore the richness and diversity of British culture.
Staffing, resources and accommodation	Good. The school has an appropriate number of teachers of varied experience who have suitable qualifications with strengths in science and music. Arrangements for the professional development of staff are good. The school's accommodation supports the teaching of the curriculum satisfactorily. The provision of learning resources is good overall with strengths in English, mathematics and science although there are some shortages in information technology and in agility apparatus for children aged under five.
Value for money	Very good. Pupils generally enter the school at average levels of attainment and leave it at above average levels. The quality of teaching is good throughout the school and expenditure per pupil is broadly at the level of the national average.

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

• **The parents' views of the school**

What most parents like about the school

- III. The part they are encouraged to play in the life of the school.
- IV. The fact that the school is approachable.
- V. The way complaints are handled.
- VI. The information they are given about what is taught.
- VII. The standards attained by the pupils.
- VIII. The fact that the children are encouraged to take part in more than daily lessons.
- IX. The values and attitudes promoted by the school
- X. The behaviour of the pupils.
- XI. The fact that their children like school.

What some parents are not happy about

- XII. The amount of information they are
- XIII. The topic work which their children are
ie of the instructions given about homework.

The findings of the inspection support the positive views of the parents. They also show that parents are given ample information about the progress of their children. The topic work set for homework is challenging for the pupils and they produce work of a high standard. The indications are that, although instructions concerning homework are clearly given in most instances, the advice provided regarding topic work is insufficient.

KEY ISSUES FOR ACTION

The governors, Headteacher and staff should address the following matters in writing the action plan, in order to raise standards and improve the provision the school makes still further.

1. Improve management procedures to ensure that the school continues to provide a high quality of education by:

(Paragraphs 62, 64, 70)

- formalising the induction procedures for the Headteacher designate;
- enhancing aspects of the school development plan including the period it covers, the priority given to developments, the link between action plans, including those for the development of subjects, and the main plan, the detail contained in action plans and evaluative elements of the success criteria used to judge the effectiveness of the plan;
- clarifying the role of the senior management team.

1. Improving curricular provision for children aged under five by:

(Paragraphs 40, 64, 68, 72, 75, 80)

- producing a clear and appropriate policy for the education of these children;
- ensuring that all aspects of curricular planning clearly reflect the Desirable Learning Outcomes for children of this age;
- clarifying the management structure for this age group;
- providing more agility apparatus and wheeled toys and ensuring that they have regular access to sand and water play;

In addition to the key issues above, the following less important weaknesses should be considered for inclusion in the action plan.

- ensuring that the work which higher attaining pupils is given is always sufficiently challenging particularly when they are not working in groups based on attainment, for example, by giving them the extension work which teachers plan before they complete the same work as other pupils, making sure that worksheets pose an appropriate degree of difficulty and being certain that their reading material is sufficiently demanding. (Paragraphs 30, 37, 85, 139)
- enhancing the school's provision for multicultural education; (Paragraphs 49, 62)
- extending the monitoring role of co-ordinators to focus on the standards attained by the pupils and to cover all subject areas; (Paragraphs 62, 72, 96, 126, 131)
- making it clear to parents what is required in the topic work set for homework; (Paragraphs 38, 58)
- ensuring that the statutory information provided for parents contains all of the required information. (Paragraph 63)

INTRODUCTION

Characteristics of the school

The Downs Church of England Primary School occupies a modern building surrounded by playing fields from which the English Channel can be seen. All of the pupils live in the large village of Walmer or in nearby Deal. The school serves a community with wide-ranging socio-economic circumstances although the number of children in high class social households in the ward in which the school is situated is at the level of the national average. In this respect, neighbouring wards are very different and range from well above to well below the national average. Most of the school's catchment area consists of owner occupied and privately rented homes although there is also a large element of Local Authority housing. Since the last inspection, the nature of the area served by the school has undergone an important change with the closure of the Royal Marines School of Music which has influenced the character and make-up of the school's intake.

1. There are 425 full time pupils on roll, 125 of whom are identified as having special educational needs. Seven pupils have statements of special educational need. The percentage of pupils identified as having special educational needs is above the national average and the percentage of pupils with statements of special educational need is broadly at the level of the national average. Six of the pupils come from homes where English is not the first language which is a slightly higher proportion than in most schools. Three pupils come from ethnic minority backgrounds which is below the national average. Around nine per cent of the pupils are entitled to free school meals which is below the national average. The school has 27 more girls than boys on roll. Children aged under five are normally admitted to the school in September and those who are not five until the 1st of May or later attend on a part-time basis until January. At the time of the inspection, the school had 52 children aged under five on roll. The ability level of the children on entry is broadly average overall.

2. The school's aims include working towards a happy, rich and secure environment which provides structures which stimulate the pursuit of knowledge and which provide a sound foundation for adult life. The school also aims to promote individual personalities, self-discipline and special talents, to create an awareness of others and to encourage a response to the school, the wider community and to God. The school development plan covers the period 1999-2000. It covers the areas of the curriculum, staffing, finance and plant and is related to the school's aims. Curricular action plans show targets, those responsible, timescales, success criteria and resources. Priorities for development include implementing fully the National Numeracy Strategy, further improvement of information and communications technology and a review of the provision of design and technology.

4. Key indicators

Attainment at Key Stage 1¹

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for latest reporting year:	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	97/98	26	31	57

4. National Curriculum		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Test/Task Results				
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	Boys	25	25	25
	Girls	29	28	28
	Total	54	53	53
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	98(96)	96(98)	96(95)
	National	80(80)	81(80)	84(83)

4. Teacher Assessments		Reading	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	Boys	25	25	26
	Girls	28	28	28
	Total	53	53	54
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	96(95)	96(94)	98(93)
	National	81(85)	85(83)	86(85)

.....

1

Percentages in parentheses refer to the year before the latest reporting year

Attainment at Key Stage 2²

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for latest reporting year:	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	97/98	37	27	65

4.	National Curriculum Test	English	Mathematics	Science
Results				
Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	Boys	18	20	27
	Girls	21	18	22
	Total	39	38	49
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	59(76)	58(82)	74(88)
	National	65(63)	59 (62)	69(69)

4.	Teacher Assessments	English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	Boys	20	18	23
	Girls	22	23	21
	Total	42	41	44
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	64(74)	62(88)	67(89)
	National	65(63)	65(64)	72(69)

4.

Attendance

Percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year: 1997/98				%
	Authorised	School		6
	Absence	National comparative data		5.7
	Unauthorised	School		0.1
	Absence	National comparative data		0.5

4.

Exclusions

Number of exclusions of pupils (of statutory school age) during the previous year:			Number
	Fixed period		0
	Permanent		0

4.

Quality of teaching

Percentage of teaching observed which is:		%
	Very good or better	33
	Satisfactory or better	100
	Less than satisfactory	0

Percentages in parentheses refer to the year before the latest reporting year

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

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

4. **Attainment and progress**

1. Analysis of the national end of Key Stage 2 tests for 1998 shows that the percentage of pupils attaining Level 4 and above, and Level 5 and above, in English and mathematics was close to the national average. In science, the percentage of pupils attaining Level 4 and above was above the national average, and at Level 5 and above, it was close to the national average. When the average of the school's results is compared with all schools, standards are below average in English and average in mathematics and science. Compared with similar schools, standards are well below average in English, below average in mathematics and average in science.

2. When the averages of the school's end of Key Stage 2 test results for 1998 are compared with those reached by the school in 1996 and 1997, they show a rise in standards when 1998 is compared with 1996 except in English where standards are below those of 1996. In English, mathematics and science, standards were higher in 1997 than in 1998. The school's provisional test results for 1999 show an improvement of 28 percentage points in the number of pupils attaining the expected level or above in English, a 23 percentage point improvement in mathematics and an 11 point increase in science. Comparison of the school's end of Key Stage 2 results between 1996 and 1999 shows standards to be rising although there was a slight fall in 1998 because of the nature of the cohort of pupils in that year.

The school has set challenging targets for improvement in literacy and numeracy and it has comfortably exceeded those set for 1999. The combined data for 1996, 1997 and 1998 show that the performance of girls was above the national average in English, mathematics and science whilst that of boys was below average in English and mathematics and close to the national average in science. No significant differences in the attainment of boys and girls were observed during the inspection.

3. The findings of the inspection are that, at Key Stage 2, pupils attain above average standards in literacy and numeracy and in all subjects except geography where standards are average. These findings are in line with the standards achieved in the school's 1999 end of key stage National Curriculum tests in English, mathematics and science. Since the school's last OFSTED inspection in February 1996, standards have improved in all subjects at this key stage except in geography, art and religious education where they have remained the same.

4. In English, by the age of 11, the pupils listen with concentration and speak confidently and maturely using a good range of language. The pupils read a wide range of books and other texts for enjoyment and interest and can give well formed reasons for their choices although higher attaining pupils do not always select material which is sufficiently challenging for them. They produce varied and interesting writing for a wide range of purposes. Punctuation and spelling are usually accurate and words are chosen imaginatively and with precision. In mathematics, by the end of Key Stage 2, the pupils develop their own strategies for problem solving, describe number patterns such as multiples, factors and square numbers, use formulae to calculate volume in cubic centimetres and construct and interpret simple line graphs. By the age of 11, in science, the pupils recognise the need for fair tests, understand photosynthesis, identify situations in which changes such as evaporation and condensation occur and explain shadows and other phenomena by the fact that light travels. In information technology, the pupils know how to send faxes and E mail and, in religious education, they understand ideas such as celebration and remembrance.

5. Analysis of the national end of Key Stage 1 tests for 1998 shows that, in reading, writing and mathematics, the percentage of pupils attaining Level 2 and above was well above the national average. The percentage attaining Level 3 and above in reading was well above, in writing it was below the national average and, in mathematics, it was above the national average. When the averages of the school's test data are compared with those of all schools, they show that standards are well above average in reading and mathematics and above average in writing. Compared with similar schools,

standards at Key Stage 1 are very high in reading, well above average in mathematics and above average in writing.

6. When the end of Key Stage 1 test results in reading, writing and mathematics for 1998 are compared with 1996 and 1997, they show that standards are consistently above the level of the national average. Taking the three years 1996, 1997 and 1998 together, there are no significant differences in the performance of girls and boys. In the 1998 end of key stage assessments by teachers in science, standards were well above average at Level 2 and above and average at Level 3 and above.

7. The findings of the inspection are in line with the school's end of Key Stage 1 test and assessment results and show standards to be above average in English, mathematics and science. Standards are also above average in literacy and numeracy and in all other subjects except design and technology and geography where they are average. These findings represent an improvement in standards in all subjects since the school's previous OFSTED inspection except in design and technology, geography and religious education where standards are the same as they were at that time.

8. In English, by the age of seven, the pupils listen attentively and respond willingly to questions in class. They use a broad range of strategies to help them to read unfamiliar words and many read accurately and fluently. The pupils show a delight in reading and discuss their books showing a good insight into the characters that they encounter in the stories. Their writing covers a good range of purposes and they produce clearly presented descriptive and narrative writing. By the end of Key Stage 1, in mathematics, the pupils use mathematical language to discuss their work and many recognise odd and even numbers. They use standard units when measuring length and communicate information in block graphs. By the age of seven, in science, the pupils make predictions and observe changes, recognise that different living things are found in various habitats, describe ways of sorting materials according to their properties and make simple generalisations such as sound becoming fainter due to distance. In information technology, they operate a computer independently and use a mouse with accuracy. In religious education, pupils understand simple stories in the Christian tradition and know some of the celebrations of faiths such as Hinduism and Judaism.

9. The attainment of children aged under five is broadly average when they enter school. The children make very good progress in mathematics and good progress in language and literacy and personal and social development and are on course to attain above average standards in these areas by the age of five.

They also make good progress in the knowledge and understanding of the world, and their creative and physical development and they attain the expected standards in these areas by the age of five. Ten lessons were observed for children aged under five and progress was very good in one and good in the other nine. By the age of five, the children have established confident and effective relationships with adults and other children. They use pictures and symbols to communicate meaning in their writing, recognise numbers up to five and, in some cases, ten, and understand that different materials are used for clothes in various seasons of the year. The children show appropriate skills when throwing and catching and they explore colour in their paintings.

10. The pupils make good progress at Key Stage 1. Good progress is made in literacy and numeracy and in all subjects. Thirty four lessons were observed at Key Stage 1 and progress was very good in eight, good in 20 and satisfactory in six. Overall, at Key Stage 2, progress is good. At Key Stage 2, progress is good in literacy and numeracy and in all subjects except geography where it is satisfactory. At Key Stage 2, 54 lessons were observed during the inspection. Of these lessons, progress was very good in 11, good in 30 and satisfactory in 13. There are no significant variations in the rate of progress throughout the school due to the consistently good quality of the teaching.

11. Good progress is demonstrated in English as pupils at Key Stage 1 become more confident as speakers, use a wider range of vocabulary and listen with increasing attention to detail as they become older. In Key Stage 2, good progress in English is shown as the pupils discuss emotive language in the literacy hour and are stimulated by the teacher's perceptive questioning to extend their ideas and to produce cogent reasons for their points of view. In mathematics, the pupils make good progress. For example, in Year 1, they compare objects by direct comparison; in Year 2, they use standard units to measure length; in Year 3, they estimate length; in Year 4, they use metric measure in problem solving situations; in Year 5, they select and use the correct measurements for measuring mass and capacity

and, in Year 6, they use a range of measuring instruments and interpret volume. In science, progress is good, particularly in experimental and investigative science. In Key Stage 1, good progress is illustrated as pupils initially classify materials according to their texture and then explore their properties, for example, which tights will stretch the most. At Key Stage 2, Year 3 pupils test papers for absorbency and Year 4 pupils devise their own investigations about the rate at which the heart beats before and after exercise. In Year 5, the pupils draw and analyse graphs about their results and make comparisons between individual responses to exercise. Further exemplification of attainment and progress is given in the subject sections of this report.

12. Pupils with special educational needs, including those with statements of special educational need, make good progress and attain good standards for their previous attainment. Evidence obtained from the pupils' individual education plans shows that the good support and careful teaching that the school provides for pupils with special educational needs give them repeated success in reaching the targets set for their work. There are no significant variations in the progress of pupils from ethnic minorities or from different backgrounds.

16. Attitudes, behaviour and personal development

13. Throughout the school, pupils, including those with special educational needs, have very good attitudes to their learning. This reflects the findings of the previous OFSTED inspection. There is a well-established work ethos in the school to which all pupils respond very positively. Almost invariably, pupils at both key stages meet the high expectations of work, response and behaviour set by staff. They listen actively and attentively, contribute willingly to oral sessions and settle quickly to familiar work routines. They work purposefully, even when not under the direct supervision of the teacher, and select and handle resources very sensibly. When challenged, pupils are confident in generating ideas and solving problems. This was seen in a dance lesson at Key Stage 1 where pupils successfully communicated their feelings towards darkness and refined their movements to convey their mood more effectively. Similarly, older pupils use their knowledge of mathematics to solve problems in map work in geography. Their aptitude for personal organisation, initiative and perseverance is shown in the quality of the meticulously researched and carefully presented projects in Key Stage 2. At a very early age, pupils take an obvious and justifiable pride in the presentation of their work.

14. Throughout the school, the behaviour of pupils is very good. This confirms the views of parents and the judgement of the previous OFSTED inspection. The school is a well-ordered, happy and caring community. In the classroom, around the school and at play pupils are considerate, respectful and supportive to adults and to each other. Lunchtimes are a pleasant social occasion. In discussion, pupils articulate a clear understanding of right and wrong and respond very well to the school's system of rewards and sanctions. They are very self-disciplined and appear to act from principles rather than the constraint of rules. Parents report that bullying is dealt with promptly and effectively and there are also good procedures in place that advocate a positive approach and the importance of prevention. There have been no exclusions in recent years. Pupils show appropriate respect and concern for their own and others' property and the environment. There is no sign of litter or graffiti and pupils are proud of their school.

15. Across the school, relationships between pupils and with the adults who support them are excellent. Pupils display good humour, respect and tolerance towards one another and are kind and sensitive when difficulties arise. They are friendly and welcoming to visitors and speak to them confidently and with a natural courtesy. Pupils work very well collaboratively, share their skills generously and use resources together fairly and willingly. In class, they listen carefully to the views of others and treat their opinions respectfully and with a maturity well beyond their years. A strong bond of trust and support is quickly built up between teachers, pupils and support staff. Teachers create a secure environment, within firm boundaries of acceptable behaviour, in which pupils have the freedom to express and explore their ideas and feelings and to enjoy their learning. Each child is treated uniquely and self-worth and personal responsibility are fostered very well in an atmosphere of mutual support and encouragement. This was evident in the celebration part of an assembly when some pupils were rewarded for always being kind, saying happy 'good mornings', repairing a broken relationship and putting others first.

16. Pupils' personal development is excellent. The ethos of the school successfully supports a sense of

community where everyone is valued and his or her contribution is recognised. Across the school, pupils' general conduct is characterised by thoughtfulness and a responsibility and readiness to help others, especially pupils with special educational needs. Their personal development is well-supported by the gradual implementation of a programme of personal, social and health education which contributes effectively to pupils' sense of identity, self-esteem, direction and ability to cope with difficulties. Pupils are very willing to undertake responsibility for daily routines, such as librarians and preparing literacy trays, which assist in the smooth running of the school. Pupils in Year 6 and Year 1 take part in the 'Buddy' system of shared reading and pupils in Year 5 are writing plays, based on nursery rhymes, to be recorded for Reception pupils. Many take part in the wide range of extracurricular activities and residential trips offer very good opportunities for pupils to live and work together in close quarters and in unfamiliar surroundings. Pupils select and support local and national charities, such as Barnardos and Blue Peter, often using their own initiative, and maintain good links with the community, for example, tree planting and the choir singing in old people's residential homes. As they move through the school, pupils evaluate their work more carefully and develop self-control and independence in learning. They carefully set themselves personal and academic targets to provide self-motivation and a sense of achievement.

17.Children aged under five are making good progress in their personal and social development. They have settled in well since starting school and are beginning to form constructive relationships with children and adults. Behaviour is very good. They take turns and share fairly, cooperate when playing together and play alongside one another harmoniously. Most of the children, including those who are very young, show interest in their tasks. Older, full-time pupils sustain concentration very well, sometimes for fifteen to twenty minutes.

21. **Attendance**

18.Attendance rates are above national averages. The unauthorised absence rate is nil. Registers are called very promptly at the beginning of sessions and lessons begin on time. Registration ensures a calm and orderly start to the day. Pupils are keen to attend and are punctual. This has a positive effect on their attainment and progress.

22. **QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED**

22. **Teaching**

19.The quality of teaching is consistently good throughout the school. Ninety eight lessons were observed during the inspection. In six of these lessons, the quality of teaching was excellent; in 26, it was very good; in 48, it was good and in 18, it was satisfactory. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen. Teaching of this quality is the main factor that promotes the good progress that the pupils make and the good standards which they achieve. These findings about teaching represent an improvement when they are compared with those of the school's last OFSTED inspection which judged the quality of teaching to be "sound or better in about eight out of every ten lessons ... and ... very good in a small proportion".

At the time of the last inspection, teaching was said to be "unsatisfactory in under two out of every ten lessons".

20.The key issues for action regarding teaching which resulted from the school's previous OFSTED inspection have been very well addressed and a wide range of teaching styles is now evident in the school. In addition, the quality of the teaching of information technology has improved since the last inspection, assessment information is now used well and more able pupils are generally well challenged.

21.The quality of teaching for children aged under five is good. It is very good for mathematics and good for personal and social development, language and literacy, knowledge and understanding of the world and creative and physical development. Ten lessons were observed for these children: one was excellent, one was very good and eight were good. The quality of teaching for children aged under five was not judged by the previous inspection.

22.At Key Stage 1, the quality of teaching is good. At this key stage, 34 lessons were seen during the inspection: three were excellent, nine were very good, 17 were good and five were satisfactory. The quality of teaching is good in all subjects and aspects of the curriculum except mathematics and numeracy where it is very good.

23. At Key Stage 2, the quality of teaching is good. At this key stage, 54 lessons were observed during the inspection: two were excellent, sixteen were very good, twenty three were good and 13 were satisfactory. At Key Stage 2, the quality of teaching is good in all subjects and aspects of the curriculum except mathematics and numeracy where it is very good and geography where it is satisfactory.

24. There are no significant variations in the quality of teaching between classes, year groups or key stages. The quality of teaching is consistently good throughout the school. In particular, the teachers have high expectations of what the pupils will achieve, they manage them well and use learning resources very effectively. The teachers have a good knowledge of the subjects that they teach, generally plan lessons well, assess the pupils' work well and use this information to help them to progress effectively. Homework is used to good purpose to support the pupils' learning. Most lessons proceed at a good pace and are well organised. The teaching assists the pupils' motivation very well and it provides them with a good attitude to work that is established when they enter the school and maintained during their time in it. Teaching pupils in groups based on attainment in numeracy and literacy promotes good progress.

25. The strengths of the teaching in this school were exemplified in a science lesson about the effects of changes in temperature on chocolate buttons. The teacher showed a very clear understanding of investigative science and of how to break down the learning to meet the needs of young pupils. The objectives of the lesson were purposeful, the teaching proceeded at a good pace and the pupils were encouraged to devise their own experiments. The pupils were encouraged to show initiative in their work but were also given just the right amount of support. There was very good discussion and evaluation between the teacher and the pupils and a high priority was given to developing their vocabulary with words such as 'viscous' being introduced. The pupils were encouraged to analyse their observations and the teacher's management of their behaviour and expectations of their level of attainment were very good.

26. Where there are weaknesses in lessons which are, overall, satisfactory, the work that higher attaining pupils is given does not always challenge them sufficiently, for example, when they are given the extension work which teachers plan for them after they complete the same work as the other pupils. In addition, worksheets do not always pose an appropriate degree of difficulty and their reading material is not always sufficiently demanding. On some occasions, the pace of lessons slows down and, of course, so does the pace of learning. These factors slow down the rate of progress.

27. The quality of the teaching of the teaching of numeracy is very good at Key Stage 1 and at Key Stage 2 and the quality of the teaching of literacy is good at both key stages. At both key stages, the National Literacy Strategy and the National Numeracy Strategy have been implemented very well. Literacy and mathematics lessons each occur every day. In their numeracy work, pupils are helped to develop mental mathematical strategies and to apply mathematics to their everyday lives. Literacy lessons are challenging and interesting. The pupils' vocabulary is extended well, they are taught to use language carefully and appropriately and to look for bias in writing. Literacy and numeracy skills are applied well across the curriculum, for example, in science and history.

28. The quality of teaching for pupils with special educational needs is very good. Careful setting of individual targets and the provision of modified work which gives rise to repeated successes for the pupils form part of the very good teaching and support received by pupils with special educational needs. Assessments of their progress are well used to inform planning their next steps, thus ensuring continuity of progress. Learning support assistants are well managed; they establish good relationships with the pupils and make a major contribution to the good progress which these pupils make.

32. **The curriculum and assessment**

29. Curricular provision is good and promotes the aims of the school effectively. It is broad, balanced and relevant and meets the statutory requirements where these apply. All subjects of the National Curriculum are provided and religious education is taught according to the locally Agreed Syllabus. Some elements of French and German are taught in the upper part of Key Stage 2 and introduce the pupils to the conversational aspects of these languages. A programme of personal, social and health education successfully includes components which help the pupils to understand the dangers of drugs. The present programme is due for evaluation and further development next year. Sex education has been agreed by governors, in consultation with parents, as part of the pupils' personal development and is planned appropriately. Some of the work is incorporated into the science Programmes of Study. Curricular provision promotes the pupils' intellectual, physical, spiritual, moral and cultural development and prepares them successfully for the next stage of their education.

30. The school gives a good emphasis to literacy and numeracy. The format of the literacy hour is now well established and many teachers provide a breadth of opportunities for speaking and listening and for writing for a range of purposes. Year 5 pupils, for example, have had a recent focus on drama and were seen creating scripts for plays based on nursery rhymes. Many teachers provide pupils with the opportunity to read for information and carry out research, although the library areas are not very conducive to this type of work. The National Numeracy Strategy is being successfully introduced and, apart from this, there are many good examples where pupils apply their skills. For example, they analyse scientific data, produce tables and line graphs to check on variables in results and measure accurately when engaged in tasks in design and technology.

31. In the previous OFSTED report, key issues relating to the curriculum, were that the school should complete the writing of policies and schemes of work and formalise subject development plans. There was a limited range of content in some subjects. More attention needed to be given to knowledge, skills and understanding, creative writing and higher order reading skills. The school has made a thorough response to the inspection which is well documented in the subsequent action plan. In addition, points included in the subject paragraphs relating to the development of the subjects have been addressed. The school has adopted the guidelines for teaching science, information technology, history and geography which have been produced by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority. These provide clear direction on how pupils will develop knowledge, skills and understanding as they move through the school. The National Literacy Strategy now incorporates content and methods which address the deficiencies in the teaching of reading and writing skills. The provision of information technology did not meet the requirements of the National Curriculum but a good emphasis on this subject has led to an improvement in the use of computers, more breadth within this specific curriculum and a rise in standards. The previous inspection identified areas of the curriculum which did not have 'consultants'. This has been rectified and there are clear management responsibilities. Some monitoring of the teaching has occurred but this has tended to focus on specific needs identified by teachers rather than an evaluation of the standards being achieved in subjects.

32. Weekly teaching hours are satisfactory and time allocations are generally appropriate although those given for information technology and religious education in Key Stage 2 are lower than average. The school's termly planning is good and work is outlined carefully over half term periods. Teachers hold regular meetings to review work, and plan together where they teach parallel classes. The headteacher effectively oversees the teaching of programmes. Daily planning is variable but usually indicates what pupils are expected to learn. Where the planning is more detailed, there is a high standard of teaching. Extension activities are often mentioned in plans but higher attaining pupils have to complete the work for the basic lesson first before tackling it which slows down their progress.

33. Pupils have equality of access to the curriculum but not all teachers try to match the work to varying levels of attainment. In individual cases, timetables do not indicate that parallel classes are spending the same amount of time on subject areas.

34. The school has reviewed the homework policy and has drawn up a home/school agreement. All pupils are expected to do homework and very precise details about the subject and the times allowed are given. Some parents feel that they do not receive sufficient guidance on the completion of project work. Although the school provides information on projects to be covered via news sheets, and invites parents

to discuss any difficulties during consultation evenings, the inspection findings are that guidance in setting out the projects, the expected length of them and particular content requirements are not always clear. The projects seen were of a very high standard and evidently prepare pupils well in developing the necessary skills for the next phase of their education.

35. The provision for extra curricular activities is very good. These include belonging to the choir, recorders, dance and drama, calligraphy and information technology. In addition to curricular time, pupils play football, netball and tennis and participate in swimming. In recent times, four different teachers have played significant roles in promoting and encouraging competitive sport. Parents and a local Sixth Form have coached the pupils in the development of skills and game strategies in football. Sixteen pupils are in the school football team and train for almost an hour for one match per week. Around ninety pupils from Years 4, 5 and 6 enjoy year group football and practise every week. Twelve pupils from Year 6 play netball fixtures with local schools and thirty-five pupils from Year 3 participate in swimming. Both boys and girls are eligible for the school football team and while boys are encouraged to attend netball, they are not very forthcoming this year. The swimming team consists of both boys and girls. In the 1997-98 season, the school football team was league and cup champions. In 1998-99 it was league runners up. In the Deal Primary Schools 5-a-side competition, the school achieved a third place. A Year 6 pupil was selected to attend a centre of excellence with a Premier League team. The school is steadily improving its performance at swimming gala meetings. Visitors and visits enhance the curriculum considerably. For example, pupils have visited a synagogue, The White Cliffs experience and Chatham dockyard and have experienced a Victorian day. The Queen Mother has visited the school and pupils prepared a concert for her. Theatre group companies provide imaginative presentations to teach pupils about scientific processes and there have been activity days at Kent University and at Canterbury cathedral.

36. The curricular provision for children aged under five is good although there are shortcomings in the policy, which is cumbersome and does not provide information efficiently, and the long-term plans, which do not reflect the six areas of learning. This omission limits the clarity of the differences in curricular provision between this age group and the other key stages. However, the medium and short-term planning is very good. Teachers use three nationally defined frameworks, the Desirable Learning Outcomes (for children aged under five), the Literacy Strategy and the Numeracy Strategy, for guidance when planning. The curriculum is organised effectively to ensure a balance of activities in step-by-step sequences. Reading books are taken home regularly and 'home-to-school' contact books are provided so that relevant information can be logged whenever children read to adults. Children, who attend part-time and full-time, have access to the full range of experiences within the six areas of learning, except for outdoor play where the range of resources is inadequate. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is excellent and good liaison with the pre-school education groups has enabled teachers to be fully prepared.

37. The assessment procedures and the quality of record keeping for children aged under five are very good. Individual records are started by the headteacher, in conjunction with parents, before children start school. Soon after starting school, teachers assess children over a period of six to seven weeks. This provides them with a clear picture of their achievements in the six areas of learning and enables staff to adapt tasks so they are suitable for every child's needs. Teachers and classroom assistants make regular notes about children's strengths and weaknesses as they learn and update their records accordingly. These day-to-day notes inform the next steps in planning very effectively and are very practical in terms of the amount of time they require to complete.

38. All pupils with special educational needs have full access to the National Curriculum and work is well adapted or matched to their needs. The requirements of the Code of Practice in terms of individual education plans for pupils with special educational needs are fulfilled well by the school. Targets are regularly reviewed at half-term intervals to maintain pupils' progress. Careful matching of work to individual capabilities takes place for these pupils, particularly in English and mathematics. Assistance within the classroom is supplied by the learning support assistants who encourage and explain in response to pupils' immediate needs. Communication systems between all those involved in working with pupils with special educational needs are well established and effective. The school's provision for pupils with special educational needs is excellent and contributes substantially to the standards achieved by these pupils. It is a strength of the school.

39. A key issue arising from the previous inspection was that assessment information should be monitored and the resulting information used for further improvement. A vigorous effort has been made to assess the progress of pupils across the school using standardised national tests and by a full analysis of National Curriculum assessments. The school has addressed the issue thoroughly. Individual attainment in English and mathematics is very carefully monitored and is accurately based on a variety of procedures including formal assessments. The information gained is extensive and is used to target pupils on an annual basis. It outlines pupils' expected achievement, indicates which targets should be set and identifies those who may be underachieving. This information is carefully used to monitor progress and is transferred to booklets which are easily accessible to track individuals, classes and year groups. The data gained from this exercise are comprehensive and focus on trends within and across year groups. As a result, pupils receive appropriate programmes and the information gained helps to set pupils accurately for English and mathematics in Years 4, 5 and 6. Teachers involved with the national tests have also analysed the results and have identified which areas of the curriculum and questions presented difficulties. For example, in science the co-ordinator discovered that pupils had drawn food chains the wrong way round. Collections of pupils' work which give examples of levels attained in all the attainment targets are in place for English, mathematics and science. Where these are annotated with explanations of why a level was judged, they are most useful in assisting teachers with accurate assessments.

40. The documentation from the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority provides good models for assessment. In English, mathematics and science, assessment takes place at the end of each unit. The procedures for assessment are very good except in religious education where they are dependent on note taking by teachers based on observations of work and pupils' responses. Policy documentation provides very clear guidance on whole-school systems and these are in place. On a regular basis, teachers carry out assessments linked to the schemes of work and also define pupils who are above, in line or below expectations. This information is then used to plan for subsequent lessons. Individual sheets are completed to show the 'best fit' levels which pupils are attaining. Teachers highlight the planning documents to indicate what pupils have achieved and to pick out further areas for development. Achievement is recorded by way of records to show the next expected stage or skill to be acquired, to give an information base for planning, future targets, summary of information for parents and aspects of development.

41. The marking policy is well implemented and some of the quality of marking is of a consistently high standard. It is encouraging and appreciative and usually guides pupils on how they might improve their work. Some good individual target setting occurs but pupils are not always sufficiently involved in developing their own goals for personal achievement. The reporting of the national assessment test results to parents meets the statutory requirements. In some reports, comments about subjects other than English, mathematics and science are often of a general nature and do not actually state what pupils can do and how they have progressed.

45. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

42. The school makes very good provision overall for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of its pupils, including those with special educational needs. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is very good. Collective worship is consistently very good in quality and sometimes excellent. Its message is mainly Christian and outside speakers from local churches frequently address the pupils. Teachers use music effectively to create a special time when pupils gather together to reflect on matters of importance and celebrate the 'Peacemakers' awards, with their emphasis on reconciliation and forgiveness. Pupils attend services at Canterbury cathedral. Parents praised the school's Christian ethos. There is a good sense of spirituality that pervades the school, for example through the school prayer, which is prominently displayed. There are good opportunities for children to marvel at the wonders of the natural world: for example, in Years 4 and 6 science, pupils were able to observe the behaviour of small invertebrates and in Year R, children aged under five thought about the effects of weather. There are good opportunities for pupils to learn about the Christian faith in assemblies and there are occasions when they can learn about other faiths. For example, there are good displays about the Hindu faith and Divali is celebrated.

43. The school's provision for pupils' moral development is very good. It is given strong emphasis, which is reinforced sensitively and consistently within classrooms by clear and positively framed rules which are clearly on display. For example, in Year R, children's names are placed on a picture of sunshine for good behaviour and on clouds for less good behaviour. Pupils are helped to understand the difference between right and wrong from an early age. Discussions, for example, in personal and social education lessons, help to develop ideas about emotions and their effects on others. The behaviour policy clearly establishes aims and principles. Teachers and other adults set high expectations of behaviour. Reward and sanctions systems are used well to acknowledge pupils' achievements in all areas of school life, including making up quarrels. Good emphasis is placed on respect for truth, people and property. Parents are very supportive of the school's approach and a very high proportion feel that it promotes good attitudes and values.

44. The excellent provision for pupils' social development is a strength of the school. It makes a significant contribution to the excellent relationships among pupils and between pupils and adults. Parents praised the school for its family and whole-community approach. The encouragement of independent learning and the opportunities for pupils to take initiative and make decisions are outstanding features of the school and make excellent contributions to pupils' social development. There are many opportunities for pupils to take responsibilities on a regular basis from the moment they arrive in the school. They are encouraged to be supportive of one another, for example, through the 'Buddy' system between Year 6 and Year R children. Pupils are particularly encouraged to try to answer teachers' questions in lessons: they are frequently reminded that mistakes are allowed and are very supportive of one another. All staff are very courteous to their pupils, respect their feelings and act as excellent role models.

45. Pupils' cultural development is good. Teachers make very good use of art and music to help pupils appreciate their own cultural traditions and those of other countries. For example, Year 6 listened to African music while making African prints and pupils in Year 5 greet their teacher in German. The curriculum is enhanced by visits from musicians and theatre groups. Very good use is made of the local environment to increase understanding of history, including visits to castles, churches and museums. There is a good range of visitors to the school, including a textile designer who worked for a week earlier in the year with Year 6, producing some impressive displays, and a Shakespeare workshop. There are fewer opportunities for pupils to develop their understanding of the richness and diversity of other cultures in this country.

46. Pupils with special educational needs take a full part in the life of the school and receive the same provision as all other pupils for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

50. Support, guidance and pupils' welfare

47. The school has maintained its very good procedures for supporting pupils' welfare. These contribute significantly to their development. Teachers and support staff are responsive to pupils' needs, thus enabling them to cope with school life and concentrate on their learning. The school has very good procedures for monitoring pupils' academic progress, through baseline assessments, standardised reading tests, continuous assessments, national assessment and annual reports. Annual meetings with parents set academic targets. There are high expectations for all pupils, including, in most cases, the more able.

48. Pupils with special educational needs are identified early and support for them is excellent. The individual needs of these pupils are well catered for by the support systems maintained by the school. Where medical or other specialist agencies such as speech therapy, physiotherapy and psychological services are needed, the school is able to make appropriate arrangements and good liaison is maintained.

49. Personal development is monitored well, through teachers' detailed records and reports. Although reports contain no provision for self-assessment, the annual meetings with parents set targets for personal development and, in many classes, pupils have personal targets displayed on their desks. Teachers give positive praise and warm encouragement for good attitudes as well as progress. There is a formal personal and social education programme, with good activities planned for each year group. They allow for the discussion of feelings and for health education, which includes visiting theatre groups presenting workshops on drug abuse. Assembly themes promote a very good awareness of self for

pupils. There is a very good range of extracurricular activities. There are very good programmes for children starting school and for transfer to secondary school. Pupils are encouraged to think of others through, for example, gifts to the elderly at harvest time and Christmas, and the school supports various charities.

50. Procedures for promoting discipline and good behaviour are very good. There is a good behaviour policy and a good system of sanctions and rewards. Rules are displayed throughout the school. Good behaviour and work are rewarded by certificates, assemblies and awards. Good behaviour is constantly reinforced by staff, including lunch time supervisors, who act as good role models. Pupils are encouraged to be courteous to one another as well as to adults. Incidents of bullying are rare and are dealt with effectively by the headteacher. These findings reflect those of the previous inspection.

51. Procedures for promoting and monitoring attendance are very good. There are clear guidelines for parents to notify the school of absence. The registers are monitored on a regular basis for patterns of lateness or absence. The school has effective child protection procedures, which follow county guidelines. The headteacher is the designated person and has been trained and there is a deputy for her absence. Teachers are watchful and aware of child protection issues. There is formal awareness training for staff, especially for new and newly qualified staff. There are good links with social services. The school's health and safety policies are good and comply with requirements. Risk assessments are carried out regularly. The caretaker is very conscientious, well trained, and watchful of the school's safety and security. The level of security is good. Two minor concerns about safety have been communicated to the governors. Fire drills are held regularly and recorded. There are three fully trained first-aiders. Procedures to deal with medical conditions are good, and the medical room is supervised. There is good practice in design technology, science and physical education. The level of supervision at playtime is good.

55. Partnership with parents and the community

52. Relationships with parents are very good. There are clear lines of communication and parents are very supportive of the school's ethos. The school has an open-door policy and parents are very positive about the school's attitudes to their concerns and suggestions. This supports the finding of the previous inspection. The information provided by the school is good. The prospectus complies with most requirements and is clear, friendly and informative. It contains full details of forthcoming work for the year to enable parents to contribute to their children's learning. Parents are pleased with information about their children's progress and feel that teachers are approachable and available to discuss problems at the end of the school day. There are two formal consultation meetings and an Open Evening each year, which are well attended and which are considered to be very helpful. The school has held sessions on the Literacy and Numeracy strategies as well as on personal and social education and home/school agreements. Reports are full and helpful and are informative about pupils' progress and personal development, although they do not set targets or allow for parents' comments or pupils' self-assessment. They sometimes include more information on the work covered than on pupils' progress. Some parents felt that they did not receive sufficient information about the progress made by their children but the findings of the inspection do not support this view.

53. There is good liaison with parents of pupils with special educational needs. They are always informed when the school feels that a pupil might have special educational needs and there is always discussion and consultation between staff and parents before these needs are formally identified. Parents are also informed about any changes of need at the time of the annual audit, and are invited to attend reviews. They have opportunities to discuss their child's individual education plan, where such a plan is appropriate, and are kept informed of changes to these plans.

54. Homework includes home/school reading books, spelling and mathematics, as well as weekend and holiday projects. There is good communication with parents through reading diaries and parents felt strongly that the school provided the correct amount of homework. Homework increases progressively through the school to prepare pupils for the next stage of their education. Parents feel very well involved with their children's learning. Home/school agreements have recently been sent to parents. Some parents were concerned about the clarity of the information they received about their children's homework and about the topic work set for this purpose. The findings of the inspection are that information about homework is mostly very clear but that the advice given regarding the topic work is

insufficient. The topic work is challenging and is completed to a high standard.

55. There is good induction for parents of children new to the school. Links with secondary schools are very good and ensure continuity. Links with the local community are very good. Visitors include local clergy and pupils attend services at the parish church. Pupils sing regularly to local senior citizens. There are good business links. There are good links with outside agencies, including police, fire brigade and railway police. The school supports several charities. Parents and other family members feel very encouraged to help in the school on a regular basis and do so in good numbers and in a good variety of ways, including helping on visits. They receive helpful guidance and are well deployed. There is a good scheme of work experience for students from local secondary schools. The Parent-Teacher Association runs a very good range of social activities. They also organise a good range of fund-raising activities that have raised good sums to buy equipment, in consultation with the school, to enhance pupils' learning. These findings reflect those of the last inspection report.

59. THE MANAGEMENT AND EFFICIENCY OF THE SCHOOL

59. Leadership and management

56. This school receives very good quality leadership and management. This is broadly the same judgement that was made by the school's last OFSTED inspection that described "the overall management of the school" as "making a very significant contribution to the standards of achievement and to the pupils' personal development". The leadership of the headteacher is fundamental to the strength of the school's management as was recognised by the previous inspection that described her leadership as "strong and clear". The governing body continues to work closely with the headteacher to provide a clear educational direction for the school. The governors have two committees that address all aspects of the school. The agendas for the meetings of these committees demonstrate how well informed the governors are about developments likely to affect the school. In addition, they visit the school regularly, attend training and have received reports from subject co-ordinators. They have a good overview of the school. The roles of the staff are clearly defined in appropriate job descriptions. Members of staff with management responsibilities make good contributions to the development of the school.

57. The school's provision for pupils with special educational needs is excellent. It contributes very well to the quality of education provided by the school and to the standards achieved by pupils with special educational needs. The provision is organised by the special educational needs co-ordinator, with the effective support of the teaching staff, headteacher, and the governing body. It reflects well the requirements of the national Code of Practice. The organisation of the learning support assistants who assist pupils with special educational needs is particularly effective. There is a named governor with oversight for special educational needs provision, who has some experience of provision for special educational needs in schools, and who liaises with the special educational needs co-ordinator.

58. The school's improvement since its last OFSTED inspection has been very good. The key issues for action from that inspection have been very well addressed. A wide range of teaching styles is now used in the school, curriculum policies and teaching schemes have been very well written and implemented and the co-ordinators' role has been developed effectively. Co-ordinators regularly monitor teachers' planning and the core subjects of English and mathematics are regularly monitored in detail. Assessment procedures are very good and assessment information is well used by teachers when they plan the pupils' work. Standards of attainment, the quality of teaching, provision for pupils with special educational needs, provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and the range of extracurricular activities provided by the school have also improved significantly since the last inspection. However, the school development plan is not as useful a management tool as it was at that time, budget links to the plan have not improved, provision for pupils to appreciate the multicultural nature of British society is not as good and the co-ordinators do not regularly monitor the teaching of all subjects or focus sufficiently on standards. The school has a very good capacity to continue to improve.

59. The school's ethos is excellent. The pupils' behaviour and their attitudes to work are very good and reflect routines and expectations that the school establishes and maintains from an early age. The

quality of relationships, provision for the pupils' personal development and racial harmony are excellent. The school has a very effective commitment to high standards. The school's aims include working towards a happy, rich and secure environment which provides structures which stimulate the pursuit of knowledge and which provide a sound foundation for adult life. The school also aims to promote individual personalities, self-discipline and special talents, to create an awareness of others and to encourage a response to the school, the wider community and to God. These aims, and the school's policies, are very well implemented. The pupils receive good equality of opportunity. Most statutory requirements are fully met although there are some omissions in the provision of statutory information for parents.

60. The strength of the leadership provided by the headteacher is also, potentially, the school's major weakness as she is due to retire at the end of the current term. At the time of the school's previous OFSTED inspection, the senior management team was described as "not fully operational". This is still the case. The present senior management team meets too infrequently and does not have terms of reference. The deputy headteacher has a target of raising his profile in the school. The management of the education of children aged under five is not documented clearly. The governors acknowledge the debt they owe to the headteacher for ensuring that they are fully advised about the school and educational developments. Induction procedures for the headteacher designate have not yet been formalised. The school development plan covers the period 1999-2000. It embraces the curriculum, staffing, finance and plant and is related to the school's aims. Curricular action plans show targets, those responsible, timescales, success criteria and resources. Priorities for development include implementing fully the National Numeracy Strategy, further improvement of information and communications technology and a review of the provision of design and technology. However, the plan lacks sufficient recorded detail beyond one year, developments are not prioritised, weaknesses in provision for children aged under five are not addressed, action plans are not always clearly linked to the main plan and contain differing degrees of detail and the criteria used to judge the success of the plan are not always sufficiently evaluative. It does not provide the school with a sufficiently clear strategic direction which is in contrast to the situation at the time of the last inspection when the plan outlined "the main priorities for development for the next few years".

64. Staffing, accommodation and learning resources

61. The school has a sufficient number of appropriately trained and experienced teachers who have particular strengths in music and science. Learning support staff are very well qualified and there are a good number of them to provide help to individual pupils in classrooms. They have particularly relevant qualifications in dealing with some of the pupils with special educational needs. The staff work together well as a team. Staff have suitable job descriptions and these are reviewed at intervals. The staff appraisal process is well established and staff training needs are linked to this. The headteacher also encourages teachers to consider their personal and professional development and targets are identified. Where needs have arisen, there has been a good response, for example, in information technology, staff have outlined where they feel most confident personally and in their competence in teaching specific skills. There are two newly qualified teachers who are benefiting from well-defined induction procedures and support from more experienced staff. Administrative staff are efficient and help the school's business to run smoothly. The caretaker is deeply committed, very supportive and is a significant asset to the school. The maintenance of the premises is of a high standard.

62. The accommodation is satisfactory and does not restrict the teaching of the curriculum. There are limitations, however, in some of the classrooms in the Goodwins building. Access to three classrooms is through one of the others and the open plan nature of the rooms means that noise travels easily. The staff and pupils work exceptionally well despite the obvious distractions which the accommodation presents. The previous inspection report noted that there was insufficient class storage and some corridor areas were cluttered. The school has worked hard to address this issue by the provision of bookcases and other storage furniture but cannot reduce this any further without losing the necessary resources for each class. The library areas are split. Some books are housed in the entrance area and others are outside Year 6. Unfortunately, there is insufficient space for pupils across the school to sit and browse and carry out research. The school grounds provide good facilities for sporting activities. Some attempt has been made to develop an environmental area and individual staff have further plans

for this now that there is secure fencing.

63. Resources are good overall. In English, mathematics and science, they are very good. The resources assistant is exceptionally well organised and prepares resources for all curricular areas. These are housed methodically in a designated area and topics are carefully labelled. This system continues to be significant in the efficient use of available resources. The previous inspection report indicated that a wider collection of artefacts would enrich the curriculum further. There is now a good range of artefacts particularly in history and religious education. The provision for special educational needs is very well resourced. There has been a recent improvement in the provision for information technology and the ratio of pupils to computer is now around the national average. Resources in art are satisfactory and the school is building a collection of prints and slides. In music, some of the tuned instruments, for example, glockenspiels, are in need of repair. The hall piano is adequate but has a faulty soft pedal and difficulties arise when adjusting the tone which is often too loud. There are good selections of new books that support reading activity times.

64. Teaching and support assistants, in both Reception classes, are committed, hard working and well qualified to teach and assist with children aged under five. Good arrangements are in place for their professional development, for example, they have attended training for literacy, numeracy and assessment procedures. The accommodation for children aged under five is good. Classes are light and spacious, cloakroom facilities are available and there is direct access to a small, securely fenced, play area outside. Resources within the classroom are good for children aged under five but there are shortcomings in those available for outdoor play. There are some small toys but the school does not have agility apparatus or wheeled toys and this limits the range of necessary experiences for their physical development.

65. There is a full-time special educational needs co-ordinator, who is well qualified and experienced and who keeps well abreast of new developments in terms of special educational needs. She leads and trains a team of 13 full and part-time learning support assistants, whose hours total 182 per week, apart from specially designated hours for specified statemented pupils for which funding is separately supplied by the Local Education Authority. There is an impressive record of specialist training for the learning support assistants; some have skills in speech and language, in writing and spelling, in behavioural problems, in occupational therapy, movement and social skills. Some assistants are pursuing higher qualifications in child care. The assistants support pupils within normal classroom lessons for the most part, but special tuition is sometimes given in response to particular needs. The assistants adapt, make and share their own resources with initiative, as well as using standard procedures and commercial material. Their work contributes very substantially to the achievements and progress made by pupils with special educational needs. There is a small open-plan room which is used as the base for the school's work in special educational needs. Resources for the provision for special educational needs are good. There is a range of diagnostic materials, books, and other equipment.

69. **The efficiency of the school**

66. The management of the school's resources is good. The school's last OFSTED inspection did not give a clear judgement about overall management of the school's resources but no significant weaknesses were indicated. The school has clear and appropriate budget setting procedures that have produced careful and clear spending plans for the current year which are well linked to the school development plan. However, at the time of its previous inspection, the school's development plan covered a number of years whereas the present plan, essentially, only covers one year so that financial planning is no longer clearly linked to it beyond this period. In addition, some of the criteria used to judge the plan's success are not sufficiently evaluative to assist fully the governors in making judgements about the cost effectiveness of spending. Furthermore, the subject action plans that the last inspection indicated would increase the efficient use of resources if established and made part of financial planning procedures vary in effectiveness for this purpose. Comparison of the school's spending patterns with those of other schools is not well developed.

67. The monitoring and administration of finance are good. The governors carefully and frequently ensure that spending is as they have projected it to be. The school's bursar keeps meticulous records of all financial transactions and provides the school with very good support in the administration of its finances. The school has not had a full audit since its last OFSTED inspection although aspects of its

finances have been audited. Funding allocated for staff training is used and is clearly related to the needs of the school and the individual. Training provision for learning support assistants is particularly good in quality. The money designated for the education of pupils with special educational needs is very well used as is shown by the inspection's findings that the provision made for these pupils is excellent.

68. Teachers are appropriately deployed as class teachers and they have suitable management roles. The consistently good quality of the teaching throughout the school indicates how effectively teachers are deployed. Staff with management roles make important contributions to the running of the school, for example, in special educational needs provision and as subject co-ordinators. The role of the co-ordinators has been well developed since the school's last inspection although the monitoring of teaching and standards does not take place regularly in all subjects. The role of the senior management team and the management of the education of children aged under five are not clearly defined. Learning support staff are particularly well used. Their deployment assists pupils with special educational needs to make good progress, ensures that learning resources are well organised and helps pupils to progress in physical education. The school's administrative staff support the implementation of the curriculum well. Accommodation is used well although the space available for the school library does not promote its use well. Learning resources are well used especially those for information technology although children aged under five do not have sufficient access to agility apparatus or sand and water play.

69. The pupils enter the school at average standards of attainment. They make good progress and leave at above average standards. The quality of the school's leadership and management is very good and that of teaching is good. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress. Expenditure per pupil is broadly at the level of the national average. The school gives very good value for money. The judgement made by the school's last OFSTED inspection was that it provided good value for money.

73.

73. **PART B: CURRICULUM AREAS AND SUBJECTS**

73. **AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN UNDER FIVE**

70. From a broadly average starting point on entering school, most children are making good progress and attaining standards that are above average for their age. In personal and social development, language and literacy and mathematics, standards are above average with and most of the children are well on course to attain the Desirable Learning Outcomes before they reach five years of age. In the areas of knowledge and understanding of the world, creative development and physical development, attainment is broadly in line. The school's last inspection did not report in great detail on this age group, however, speaking and listening, reading, writing and numeracy were judged to be above average or good in pre-Key Stage 1, which is similar to the current inspection findings.

71. The induction arrangements are very good and children have settled in well since starting school. They are well behaved and show good attitudes in most learning situations. The quality of teaching for this age group is good. Teachers have a clear understanding of how young children need to be challenged and provide well-planned classroom activities. Teachers and classroom assistants lead some activities, whereas, at other times, children have freedom to choose from a range on offer. Curricular provision is good, even though there are some shortcomings in resources for their physical development. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is excellent. Good liaison with pre-school education groups has enabled teachers to plan suitable tasks as early as possible. Assessment procedures are very good. Shortly after entry to the school, detailed and specific assessments take place. This enables teachers to adapt tasks so that they are appropriate for each child's needs. Teachers and their assistants are involved in the assessment of day-to-day learning. The strengths and weaknesses in learning are noted and are used to plan the next steps required for individual needs. The accommodation is good and there is a small, fenced, play area directly outside both classes. Classroom resources are good in quality and range but insufficient use is made of sand and water trays. The school has no agility apparatus or wheeled toys for pupils to explore during play times and free-choice periods. The school has not made adequate provision for this shortage in their development plan.

75. **Personal and social development**

72. Children are making good progress in their personal and social development. The quality of teaching is good and successfully promotes the school's aims, such as working towards a happy and secure environment, the promotion of self-discipline and having an awareness of others. Children are establishing good relationships with each other and with teaching staff; for example, they are very sociable and willingly join in. They are confident and willing to take on responsibilities, such as taking the register to the office. They concentrate well, are good listeners for their age, and settle down to work quickly and eagerly. This is evident in the way that children are able to work independently, without the support of adults, and as part of a group. They show initiative when choosing activities or resources and share fairly when playing alongside one another. Children behave very well and teachers positively promote acceptable behaviour by using simple, but effective, procedures. For example, pupils know what is required of them to ensure that their name is placed on the poster of a 'happy sun' in preference to a 'grey cloud'. Already, they accept the rules of the classroom and are learning to listen to others without interrupting, to put up their hands rather than calling out and to answer the register politely. Children show independence in their personal hygiene and when dressing and putting on aprons. They treat classroom property with care, looking after paintbrushes and books properly, and clear away equipment promptly when asked. Teachers provide good opportunities for children to show a range of feelings. In their drawings, they show joy and sorrow - for their first day at school, wonderment when listening to stories and delight when watching other children. They acknowledge the religious aspects of assembly and bow their heads in prayer.

Language and literacy

73. Most pupils are making good progress and are attaining above average standards. They are on course to attain the standards, defined in national frameworks, before they reach five years of age. Teachers provide good quality teaching and many opportunities to develop and practise all aspects of language. For example, when working with the whole class or with groups, teachers prompt

conversations by questioning children and inviting them to respond. They read them stories and provide taped stories, to promote good listening skills and an interest in books. Children listen attentively to the stories and laugh at the funny bits. When working and playing alongside each other, they join in with conversations spontaneously and tell each other what they are doing. Teachers extend their ability to listen and respond by participating in their imaginary role-play and helping them to explore new ideas. Vocabulary is developing well and they can now identify the 'contents' page. In mathematics, they name shapes correctly. They enjoy reading books for themselves and show great interest, for example, in the pictures, which they use well to find out information, about spiders and webs or to re-tell stories. They associate sounds with letters and the beginning of words and volunteer information, such as, "This one starts my name and this one starts my sister's name". Staff encourage children to write and make their own marks and at other times they act as a scribe for them. When writing, children use pictures, symbols and letters to communicate meaning and they trace over adults' handwriting, mostly with good control. A few lower attaining pupils find tracing letters difficult, however, higher attaining pupils can copy their teacher's writing clearly and a very small number can use cursive handwriting, with both upper and lower case letters clearly shown.

77. Mathematics

74. In mathematics most children are making very good progress and attaining above average standards. Teachers and classroom assistants make effective use of demonstration, discussion and repetition. For example, registration is used to count the number of boys and girls present and to compare numbers to the previous day. Lesson introductions are used successfully. Children recognise and recite numbers, and count on further, to five and to ten. They laugh if their teacher makes a 'mistake' and are eager to say what is wrong. They enjoy counting games; they can count the number of claps performed by their teacher and can repeat them accurately. They join in singing familiar number rhymes, such as 'This old man', with gusto. The methods and organisational strategies employed by teachers are very effective. Grouping arrangements ensure that each group experiences two different activities per lesson and four out of the five groups have an adult involved. Children working independently are clear about what has to be done and they show high levels of concentration. Teachers plan first-hand practical experiences which children find interesting and can relate to everyday life. For example, with the teacher in the role of a bus driver and the children using number cards, they are keen to board the class bus. This involves them recognising numbers, counting out coins and adding 'one more than' to get the correct fare for the journey. Language development is well focused. Children use vocabulary, such as circle and square, for flat shapes, and use comparative terms, such as longer or shorter, when measuring. Tasks, which focus on patterns and relationships, also help to develop children's dexterity. Children match jigsaw pieces accurately and create patterns using coloured pegs or by threading wooden balls onto laces. Most children are beginning to use their developing mathematical knowledge to solve practical problems. For example, when working outside, they count the spots on a die and know which numeral is one more on the number grid. Higher attaining pupils can count up to 12 and can draw the correct amount of pictures to represent given numbers.

78. Knowledge and understanding of the world

75. Pupils mostly make good progress and attain average standards in this area of learning. Teachers provide a wide range of opportunities for children to explore the environment and to observe the world around them. They link the experiences well so that other areas of learning are drawn together naturally. For example, work seen on display about the story of 'Little Red Hen' involved language, early scientific observations about making bread, and simple painting and printing techniques for creative expression. Purposeful work on weather provides pupils with opportunities to explore materials and discuss what they have found out. They know that different types of clothing are worn and recognise that plastic is good for keeping out the rain, wellington boots keep their feet dry and care has to be taken with umbrellas, as they can be dangerous to eyes. Children get very involved with the activities and imagine what it is like to be cold by shivering – much to the enjoyment of others. When there is freedom to choose, they are keen to explore different resources and equipment. Children construct large models, sometimes with moving joints and wheels, and use skills, such as cutting, folding and joining, to make smaller items, for example, toy umbrellas. Work with computers supports learning effectively. Pupils are finding out about the different options available and can draw Humpty Dumpty, using a mouse, in-fill with colour and change the background colour.

79. **Physical development**

76. Overall, children are attaining average standards in physical development and are generally making good, and sometimes very good, progress. A shortage of outdoor agility apparatus and wheeled toys limits the opportunities for children to explore and develop their physical skills adventurously. Their dexterity and manipulative skills are progressing very well. Staff focus clearly on the skills to be taught, demonstrating them very effectively so that children can take good note. Children know how to tackle tasks and employ the skills well, holding scissors correctly for cutting, following curved lines when painting and using a computer mouse with fine movements. Children are developing control and well co-ordinated movements when throwing and catching balls although they do not use the space available to best effect. Within the classroom, children move around carefully and take others into consideration as they move from one place to another.

80. **Creative development**

77. Children show obvious enjoyment when working creatively. They draw and colour pictures of themselves complete with school uniform and use coloured crayons to produce self-portraits. They demonstrate an understanding of feelings, and pictures of their first day in school showed both joy and sorrow. Pupils enjoy painting and choose the colours with care, for example, they use the appropriate colours for farmyard animals. Other artwork provides evidence of hand-printing and sponge-printing techniques, and the exploration of different media to represent their work in three dimensions. Pupils shape malleable materials by squeezing and rolling, use construction equipment to build fantasy models and have helped to make a weather mobile for the class. Teachers provide good opportunities for pupils to express ideas creatively through sound and through imaginative play, when they join in and take part. Children sing along with audio tapes and join in enthusiastically by patting their cheeks, for gentle rain, blowing softly, for a summer breeze and clapping loudly, for thunder. When playing imaginatively, children show their ability to extend ideas. Often these come from activities involving small toys, such as train tracks and farmyard animals or when playing in the home corner. Pupils talk about what they are doing and follow up each other's ideas. Occasionally, children initiate their own ideas. One little girl pretended to be the teacher and happily involved one other child and a teddy in the role-play.

81. **ENGLISH, MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE**

81. **English**

78. Analysis of the national end of Key Stage 2 tests for 1998 shows that the percentage of pupils attaining Level 4 and above and Level 5 and above in English it was close to the national average. When the average of the school's results is compared with all schools, standards are below average in English. Compared with similar schools, standards are well below average in English. When the averages of the school's end of Key Stage 2 test results for 1998 are compared with those reached by the school in 1996 and 1997, they show a fall in standards when 1998 is compared with 1997. Standards were higher in 1997 than in 1998. The school's provisional end of Key Stage 2 results for 1999 show a 28 percentage point improvement in the number of pupils attaining Level 4 or above and confirm the rising trend in attainment since 1996. The school has comfortably exceeded its 1999 target for pupils reaching Level 4 and above in this subject. The combined data for 1996, 1997 and 1998 show that the performance of girls was above the national average in English whilst that of boys was below average. No significant differences in the attainment of boys and girls were observed during the inspection.

79. The findings of this inspection are that standards, including those for literacy, are on course to be above the level of the national expectation at the end of Key Stage 2. This judgement is in line with the results of the school's 1999 end of key stage national tests and assessments. This represents a significant improvement since the last OFSTED inspection in 1996 when standards of achievement throughout the school were judged to be average overall.

80. At Key Stage 2, pupils attain above average standards in speaking and listening. All pupils listen attentively, develop ideas thoughtfully and take account of the views of others when formulating a reply. They express themselves clearly and confidently, organise what they want to say and communicate information using a range of interesting vocabulary and correct syntax. Higher attaining pupils

demonstrate a breadth of vocabulary, ask questions to develop ideas and reply with precision to the point being made. Lower attaining pupils answer questions sensibly and make constructive contributions to class and group discussions. This was evident in a Year 6 personal, social and health education lesson, when pupils were able to recognise and articulate their feelings of jealousy and how to cope with them. They discussed alternative viewpoints in a good humoured, mature and reflective manner under the sensitive guidance of the teacher. However, opportunities for pupils to take part in structured drama activities, apart from role-play, are more limited.

81. At Key Stage 2, standards in reading are above average. With few exceptions, pupils of all levels of attainment read widely and with obvious enjoyment. They read their books thoughtfully with fluency, accuracy and expression and evaluate the texts with increasing competence. By Year 6, pupils respond imaginatively to plot, characters and ideas in literature and can refer to relevant phrases and passages to support their opinions. Higher attaining pupils are sensitive to nuances of character and dialogue and can identify what is distinctive about an author's style, but they are not always challenged by the books that they choose to read. Work in the literacy hour is considerably enhanced by the daily Reading Activity Time which provides pupils with good opportunities to apply and consolidate their reading skills through, for example, reviews, character studies, book covers, posters and wider reading. In general, pupils are competent in locating ideas and information especially when using the library or information technology

82. Throughout the key stage, pupils attain above average standards in writing and make good use of the knowledge gained through studying texts to improve their own work. By the age of eleven, pupils write for a wide range of purposes and readers and their writing reflects a variety of moods, for example, imaginative stories, drama scripts, persuasive writing, biased and balanced reporting, instructions, poetry and imitating the style of an author. Ideas are developed in interesting and creative ways, vocabulary is used thoughtfully, and often adventurously, and there is a growing sense of style. Higher attaining pupils write with flair and pace and understand how to vary style and mood. Sentences are usually grammatically complex, spelling is generally accurate and words are chosen with precision. Punctuation is normally used correctly. Most pupils have well-formed joined handwriting which they apply fluently in a range of tasks. All pupils are practising techniques such as planning, editing, redrafting and refining their writing and use a dictionary and thesaurus regularly to improve the quality of their work.

83. Analysis of the national end of Key Stage 1 tests for 1998 shows that, in reading and writing the percentage of pupils attaining Level 2 and above was well above the national average. The percentage attaining Level 3 and above in reading was well above, but, in writing, it was below the national average. When the averages of the school's test data are compared with those of all schools, they show that standards are well above average in reading and above average in writing. Compared with similar schools, standards at Key Stage 1 are very high in reading and above average in writing. When the end of Key Stage 1 test results in reading and writing for 1998 are compared with 1996 and 1997, they show that standards are consistently above the level of the national average. Taking the three years 1996, 1997 and 1998 together, there are no significant differences in the performance of girls and boys.

84. The findings of this inspection are that standards are on course to be above the level of the national expectation by the end of Key Stage 1. This is an improvement since the previous inspection when standards were deemed to be average overall 'with some above average achievement particularly in Pre Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 1'.

85. By the age of seven, pupils' speaking and listening skills are well-developed. They communicate their views clearly, using a growing vocabulary, and respond appropriately to what others say. Pupils listen attentively to stories, follow the instructions of their teacher and join in assemblies enthusiastically. Higher attaining pupils are sensitive to the needs of the listener and their speech is lively and expressive. All these features were evident in a Year 2 literacy lesson where pupils spoke clearly and confidently about a sequence of instructions for making a rocket while other pupils listened quietly and courteously.

86. At Key Stage 1, standards in reading are above average. Pupils handle books confidently and have a good knowledge of their organisation. They read simple books accurately and with growing expression.

Most pupils have a very sound understanding of phonics, a good sight vocabulary for their age and secure strategies for reading unfamiliar words and establishing meaning. Higher attaining pupils read with very good expression and have clear views about their reading preferences. Pupils with special educational needs read at a good level relative to their capabilities. Most pupils display an interest in the stories that are read to them and express a variety of feelings at the twists and turns of the plot or the fate of characters.

87. As they progress through Key Stage 1, pupils' writing is above average. Most pupils convey meaning clearly and write sentences with an awareness of their construction. They use apt and interesting vocabulary to communicate their ideas and show suitable accuracy in the spelling of simple words and in their use of capital letters and full stops. The writing of higher attaining pupils is imaginative and lively and they are able to draw on a varied and expressive choice of words. Handwriting is usually clearly shaped, correctly orientated and consistent in size. Some pupils have already developed a sense of pride in the presentation of their work.

88. Throughout both key stages, pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress as they develop their knowledge of language and use it in more complex and original ways. At both key stages, pupils consolidate and extend the skills they learn by applying them across the curriculum. From good levels of attainment on entering Year 1, pupils make good progress in developing their confidence as speakers and in improving their ability to listen productively. By Year 6, pupils speak fluently and have an extensive vocabulary that they use with understanding and maturity. Pupils' good speaking and listening skills make a significant contribution to their progress in other subjects. Progress in reading, including for pupils with special educational needs, is good at both key stages. Pupils competently use a range of strategies, such as phonic and contextual clues, and soon acquire a bank of familiar words to call upon. Accuracy and fluency develop well through the year groups, especially in group reading sessions and, by the end of Key Stage 2, pupils confidently read, analyse and evaluate a good range of texts and identify meanings beyond the literal, commenting on their significance. Pupils become progressively more competent in the use of the library classification system and can locate information quickly. Their progress is enhanced by Reading Activity Time that develops critical awareness and channels their enthusiasm for reading productively. Progress in writing is good throughout the school. A structured programme of teaching ensures that pupils make good progress in learning grammatical rules and the conventions of spelling as they move from year to year. Progress in hand writing also keeps pace with their progress in other aspects of the subject. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils are aware of the importance of precise language and improve the quality of their work by studying the styles of recognised authors and practising the techniques that they use. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards achieving the literacy targets on their individual education plans. The National Literacy Strategy, although very well implemented and understood by staff, has not yet had its full impact on pupils' long-term progress.

89. The response of pupils to the teaching of English is very good throughout the school. Pupils are self-disciplined, able to work independently from an early age and co-operate well when engaged in group tasks. They settle to work quickly and sustain concentration well. Pupils of all ages show well-established work habits, apply themselves conscientiously to written tasks and display a thoughtful approach to the content of their work. They have courteous and good humoured relationships with each other and with all adults involved in their learning and respect and support each other's views. Most pupils show a well-developed capacity for personal study and willingly take responsibility for their own learning. They respond well to a high level of challenge and persevere when presented with a demanding task.

90. Throughout the school, the quality of teaching in English is good. The previous OFSTED report judged that the quality of teaching in Key Stage 1 was 'equally sound or good' and in Key Stage 2, 'teaching quality is generally good'. All teachers have a good knowledge and understanding of the structure of the literacy hour and manage its different components successfully. Most sessions begin with a lively focused introduction and end with an effective plenary to consolidate and assess learning and celebrate achievement. Teachers have secure subject knowledge appropriate to the stage of pupils' development and high expectations of work, behaviour and response. Planning is well-detailed and appropriately levelled and assessment is used productively to modify work and chart progress.

Teachers also have successful strategies for involving all pupils and use questioning skilfully to check understanding and challenge thinking. Most lessons have a brisk, purposeful pace and resources are used effectively to stimulate and develop learning. All teachers are responsive to pupils' needs, recognise and value their efforts and build confidence and self-esteem. In a Year 1 lesson, where pupils explored the story 'On the sand', the style, organisation and skills of the teacher contributed to their rapid progress. Similarly, in a lesson on journalistic writing in Year 6, pupils discussing and using emotive language progressed very well as a result of enthusiastic, structured and challenging teaching. Weak features within satisfactory lessons include a slowing down of pace, failure to recognise when pupils are ready to move on in their learning and missed opportunities to pick up pupils' difficulties and use them as teaching points. Marking is generally good and provides pupils with positive and informative feedback about their work. Homework also reinforces class work effectively and extends opportunities for independent learning.

91. The curriculum is broad and balanced and meets the requirements of the National Curriculum. The subject is supported by a comprehensive policy that, together with the framework for the National Literacy Strategy, provides a useful scheme of work and details progressive sequences of learning across the school. Planning at all stages is appropriately detailed and thorough assessment procedures successfully monitor progress, inform planning and identify pupils who need support. Pupils' reading skills are assessed regularly and are systematically recorded although procedures for assessing speaking and listening are undeveloped. The school has recently introduced language targets to help pupils monitor their own learning and to have greater control over their own skills and strategies. This is a significant improvement since the last OFSTED inspection when assessment and monitoring continuity and progression were identified as weaknesses.

92. The two co-ordinators for English provide very good leadership and direction for colleagues through training, support and advice. Their monitoring role is being steadily developed and this gives them a productive overview of teaching and learning in the subject. However, there has been no formal evaluation or monitoring of the implementation of the National Literacy Strategy. Targets for improvement include maintaining the momentum of the literacy hour, extended writing, speaking and listening and drama. Some staff have volunteered for advanced literacy training. Resources are very good and there is a very good range of literature and non fiction material which is attractively displayed. The previous OFSTED report highlighted weaknesses in pupils' researching and referencing skills, but this has now been addressed as is evident in the meticulously researched projects that pupils have undertaken. Curricular provision is enhanced by a school bookshop, Poetry Day and Shakespeare Workshop. The subject also makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development when they write creatively, as in 'Quest' inspired by their reading of the Chronicles of Narnia, discuss moral issues within stories, take part in the 'Buddy' scheme and learn through their wider reading of poetry and works such as 'Beowulf' of other times, places and cultures.

96. **Mathematics**

93. Analysis of the national end of Key Stage 2 tests for 1998 shows that the percentage of pupils attaining Level 4 and above, and Level 5 and above, in mathematics was close to the national average. When the average of the school's results is compared with all schools, standards are average in mathematics. Compared with similar schools, standards are below average in mathematics. When the averages of the school's end of Key Stage 2 test results for 1998 are compared with those reached by the school in 1996 and 1997, they show a rise in standards when 1998 is compared with 1996. Standards were higher in 1997 than in 1998. The school's provisional end of Key Stage 2 results for 1999 show a 23 percentage point improvement in the number of pupils attaining Level 4 or above and confirm the rising trend in attainment since 1996. The combined data for 1996, 1997 and 1998 show that the performance of girls was above the national average in mathematics whilst that of boys was below average. No significant differences in the attainment of boys and girls were observed during the inspection.

94. The inspection findings show that most pupils at the end of the key stage are on course to attain above average standards. This judgement is an improvement on the previous inspection findings and on the school's 1998 end of Key Stage 2 national tests. It can be explained by the clear targets set by the

school, the marked rise in standards in the school's test results in 1999 (national comparisons are yet to be published) and the current Year 6 being a different cohort. Nearly all pupils in Year 6 make good progress, as do pupils with special educational needs throughout the school, who attain suitable standards for their abilities. Most pupils are developing their own strategies for problem solving and can organise their work clearly. They recognise proportions of number and can use percentages and fractions, including examples of equivalent fractions, to describe them. They identify orders of rotational symmetry, draw mirror reflections and can construct and interpret simple line graphs. Higher attaining pupils are effectively challenged to extend their skills and knowledge further. When solving problems, such as pricing cruises in the Lake District or investigating different components in textiles, they identify the information they need and check that the results are reasonable. Their understanding of the value of the different digits in numbers is good; they are able to multiply and divide decimals by 10, 100 and 1000. When drawing shapes, they measure and draw angles to the nearest degree.

95. Analysis of the national end of Key Stage 1 tests for 1998 shows that, in mathematics, the percentage of pupils attaining Level 2 and above was well above the national average. The percentage attaining Level 3 and above was above the national average. When the averages of the school's test data are compared with those of all schools, they show that standards are well above average in mathematics. Compared with similar schools, standards at Key Stage 1 are well above average. When the end of Key Stage 1 test results in mathematics for 1998 are compared with 1996 and 1997, they show that standards are consistently above the level of the national average. Taking the three years 1996, 1997 and 1998 together, there are no significant differences in the performance of girls and boys.

96. The findings from the inspection show that most pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 are on course to attain standards which are above average. This judgement is an improvement on the previous inspection findings and closely reflects the results of the 1998 end of key stage national tests for this age group. At this point in the academic year, the evidence to support standards that are well above average is limited to work in number. Most pupils in Year 2 can discuss their own work using mathematical language and can communicate their findings in simple block graphs, for example, when investigating different types of shoes. They can arrange numbers to 100 in order and correctly choose addition or subtraction when dealing with simple money problems. Higher attaining pupils can understand three digit numbers, can identify how many hundreds, tens and units they contain. Most pupils are beginning to use standard units, when measuring length. They measured their own feet with decimetres and recognised the need for smaller units to ensure that new shoes would be the right size.

97. From above average levels of attainment on entering Key Stage 1, pupils consistently make good progress, effectively supported by high quality teaching. Target setting is well established and there is a good emphasis on mental calculation in lessons. Assessment information is used well to plan the work within lessons and to match it to pupils' individual needs. Good progress can be exemplified by the work on measurement, which demonstrates the development of pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding over time. In Year 1, pupils begin by comparing two objects to find out which is longer or heavier. In Year 2, they use non-standard units to measure and are beginning to use standard units for length, as already outlined. As pupils move into Key Stage 2, they estimate and use centimetres to measure length and can apply them in problem solving situations in Year 4. By Year 5, pupils select and use the correct units in a range of situations and in Year 6, they can calculate volume in cubic centimetres.

98. There is a small variation in the levels of pupils' response between the key stages, which is very good at Key Stage 1 and good at Key Stage 2. This difference is related to occasional shortcomings in teaching. At both key stages, good levels of interest and concentration are evident. Pupils listen attentively, work well independently, have a good output of work and take pride in the presentation of their work. They behave very well and are courteous to staff and visitors. They reply politely when questioned and are eager to volunteer information and explain what they are doing. School resources and equipment are well looked after and are shared appropriately when working collaboratively. In Year 4 pupils passed solid shapes around for all to see and a boy and a girl co-operated very well when using the computer. Constructive relationships exist and there is a good work ethic within a positive and friendly atmosphere. In Key Stage 2, occasionally, pupils' levels of concentration are variable and they whisper and fidget during oral work.

99. The quality of teaching in mathematics has improved since last the inspection. It is very good at both key stages. Two lessons were excellent. Teachers structure lessons to include oral and mental work, a main teaching activity and a plenary session to focus on the learning which has taken place. Teachers' subject expertise is very good. This is demonstrated by the use of effective questioning, carefully aimed at individuals, and the range of methods employed to develop numeracy skills. For example, in Year 6, pupils working in pairs were challenged to find out which was the quicker, mental calculation or using a calculator.

100. Teachers have high, but appropriate, expectations of pupils. Work is effectively planned to meet differing levels of attainment, including the use of homework. Both medium and short term planning is very good. It takes account of the key objectives in the framework for the National Numeracy Strategy and pupils are kept well informed of the lesson's objectives. There is a good mix of whole-class, group and individual teaching with competent support from classroom assistants, who are very well used to assist pupils as they learn. Good question and answer sessions are helpful for recapping information and checking pupils' understanding. Resources are very well prepared and used. In Year 4, a 'counting stick' was effectively used to create pace and challenge. Pupils were required to count forwards and backwards in different sized steps, at speed. Assessment information is used very competently. Teachers pick up quickly on pupils' needs, build on the previous day's work and make notes to inform their teaching plans. Standards of discipline are good throughout the school but, although infrequent, a few teachers do not ensure that all pupils are concentrating. Occasionally, in Key Stage 2, the pace of a lesson is slow. The teacher talks for too long, concentration wanes and there is insufficient time for pupils to work independently on the main activity.

101. The subject meets the requirements of the National Curriculum. The curricular provision and assessment methods are very good. There is a high quality policy in place, which provides clear information for a consistent approach to teaching. The National Numeracy Strategy has been very effectively implemented and the setting arrangements provide an additional level of challenge for higher attaining pupils, which supplements the good approaches already in place. From scrutiny of pupils' work in books and on display, it is evident that they use and apply numeracy skills well in other curricular areas. For example, in map work in geography, different scales and co-ordinates are used and in science, pupils record pulse and heart rates in line graphs. The assessment programme in place is very good and includes standardised testing in addition to the national testing at the end of key stages. Detailed analysis takes place, which is used very well to cater for individual needs and to inform curricular planning. Pupils' annual reports are well written and informative. The two co-ordinators have formed a good partnership to oversee the two key stages. Strengths include the focus on monitoring - all teaching has been observed and teachers' planning is checked. Weaknesses relate to monitoring standards in pupils' books, which has not taken place.

105. **Science**

102. Analysis of the national end of Key Stage 2 tests for 1998 shows, that in science, the percentage of pupils attaining Level 4 and above was above the national average and, at Level 5 and above, it was close to the national average. When the average of the school's results is compared with all schools, standards are average in science. Compared with similar schools, standards are average in science. When the averages of the school's end of Key Stage 2 test results for 1998 are compared with those reached by the school in 1996 and 1997, they show a rise in standards when 1998 is compared with 1996. In science, standards were higher in 1997 than in 1998. The school's provisional end of Key Stage 2 results for 1999 show an 11 percentage point improvement in the number of pupils attaining Level 4 or above and confirm the rising trend in attainment since 1996. The combined data for 1996, 1997 and 1998 show that the performance of girls was above the national average in science whilst that of boys was close to the national average. No significant differences in the attainment of boys and girls were observed during the inspection.

103. The inspection findings are that standards are above national expectations by the end of Key Stage 2. This indicates an improvement since the previous inspection when standards were judged to be mainly average at both key stages but below average with regard to the attainment target which covers scientific skills and investigative approaches. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils present systematically recorded observations and measurements, often as line graphs, for example, to show which cup is the

best insulator and what happens to substances when they are heated. Many pupils recognise the feeding relationships between plants and animals in a habitat, refer to the words 'prey' and 'predator', describe the main functions of plant organs, use keys to identify plants and animals and relate environmental conditions to different types of creatures in their study of the seashore. They make close observations of puddles, for example, and identify various situations in which changes, such as evaporation, take place. When investigating shadows, they offer explanations as to their cause and use their knowledge of physical processes, when studying sound, to suggest changes which would alter pitch or volume.

104. Analysis of the national end of Key Stage 1 assessments by teachers in science shows that the percentage of pupils attaining Level 2 and above was well above the national average and the percentage reaching Level 3 and above was close to it. Taking the three years 1996, 1997 and 1998 together, there were no significant differences in the performances of boys and girls. Compared with similar schools, standards are well above average at Level 2 and above, and average at Level 3. Provisional results from the 1999 assessments indicate that a similar standard is being maintained.

105. The inspection findings are that, by the end of Key Stage 1, pupils attain standards which are above average. Pupils are developing good scientific skills. Most pupils understand that different creatures are found in various habitats and several can draw accurate conclusions about the differences between living and non-living things in the environment. They recognise conditions which are best for the growth of plants. From their observations, they discover that shoes are made of different materials and make comparisons between tights for their capacity to stretch. Higher attainers understand that tests have to be fair and predict what will happen to chocolate when it is held in the hand, put in the sun or surrounded by boiling water. Many know that water, when frozen becomes ice and that, when it is heated, it becomes steam. Their knowledge is further extended when they predict and observe the results of freezing milk, a biscuit, tomato ketchup and jelly. All of them recognise that there are changes which are irreversible, for example, when cooking an egg.

106. Pupils make good progress throughout the school but especially at the end of the key stages. When pupils with special educational needs work with support assistants within classes they make particularly good progress. Rapid progress is made in the area concerning investigative and experimental science. Most teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve and discussion forms an important part of successful lessons. Year 1 pupils get off to a good start when they learn about the senses and feel different types of fabrics. This leads them to classify them according to their texture. This exploratory approach is reinforced in Year 2 when pupils stretch and bend materials and realise some of their properties. By Year 3, pupils can reach conclusions about the best material to use for making a chair and carry out product tests, for example, by designing an experiment to discover the most effective type of paper to mop up liquid. Progress is good in Year 4 when pupils make investigations about their own heartbeats before and after exercise and compare the norm for their age. They learn that some minibeasts do not have a skeleton from close observation. At times, the scientific element is obscured when the exercise becomes one of observational drawing rather than producing a diagram. Progress accelerates in Year 5 when pupils learn about the function of the heart, test pulse rates, draw line graphs and analyse the results, thus making comparisons between individuals. The work in Year 6 continues to build on earlier scientific skills and pupils use the appropriate vocabulary when describing processes, for example, photosynthesis and condensation.

107. Throughout the school, the pupils respond well to the teaching of science. They show sustained interest in their work and apply themselves with enthusiasm. They are encouraged to use their initiative and take responsibility in setting up experiments and finding solutions to problems. For example, Year 5 pupils were very involved in designing and executing tests to discover how the pulse rate might change when people are frightened, stressed, shocked or physically active. Often pupils are consulted about the best way to record their findings. Pupils are very supportive to each other when collaborating in pairs or within a group. They readily share equipment, collate evidence and act as scribes. Behaviour within lessons is of a consistently high standard.

108. There was no clear judgement of the quality of teaching in the school's last OFSTED report. The findings were that 'while much sound, some good and a small amount of very good teaching was observed, some teaching is unsatisfactory'. The findings of this inspection are that the quality of teaching is good at both key stages. Very good teaching occurs in one in four lessons. Most of the

teaching reflects good subject knowledge, which was a previous weakness, but is now evident in the effective questioning, extension of scientific terminology and reinforcement of lesson objectives. Resources are well prepared and are used to encourage pupils to learn through practical experiments. Expectations are high, particularly at the end of the key stages. Lesson plans vary in their detail and attention to the needs of all pupils. For example, more challenging extension activities for the higher attainers are often added on to basic content when pupils are capable of tackling the work at an earlier stage of the lesson. In the best lessons, planning is detailed and reflects the careful structure of the lesson. Teachers use imaginative approaches and demonstrate very competent organisational skills. They engage pupils in 'acting as scientists' by involving them in the planning and recording of the investigations and require them to analyse carefully the outcomes and evidence from observations. In these lessons, time is given to discussing the conclusions as occurred when Year 3 pupils discussed their findings on the absorbency of different types of paper. Where there is an inadequate discussion at the end of the practical work, some pupils are unclear about the purpose of it. All teachers relate positively to pupils and management skills are strong. In a few instances, all pupils copy the same facts from the board or a worksheet when many are capable of writing their own accounts.

109. There is a good emphasis on experimental science which was a weakness at the time of the previous inspection. A new scheme of work from the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority was introduced during the last academic year and is becoming established. This ensures that scientific areas are covered systematically and it provides a breadth of knowledge and practical experiences. Assessment procedures are linked to the units within the scheme and are regularly undertaken. Collections of pupils work have been carefully compiled to show examples of levels in all the attainment targets and these help teachers to make accurate judgements. Records are compiled for individual pupils and are useful in highlighting strengths and areas for development.

110. A knowledgeable and conscientious co-ordinator, who monitors the teaching of the subject and provides effective support, manages the subject very well. Resource provision is very good. Contributions have also been welcomed from links with local industry and secondary schools. Visitors and theatre groups, who have developed the pupils' understanding of scientific issues in imaginative ways, enhance the curriculum. Information technology supports the subject well and Year 4 pupils were seen gathering information from CD-ROMs about the functions of muscles while individuals in Year 6 visited a web site on the Internet in their research into marine biology. Science makes a very positive contribution to the pupils' spiritual, moral and social development. For example, pupils explore the wonder of nature when they watch plants grow, discover the skeletal structure of pigeons and rabbits, make comparisons between minibeasts and learn about the diversity of life on the seashore. They consider conservation and pollution when they research into how long materials take to decay and how humans can destroy animals' habitats. Within science, there are many good opportunities for pupils to develop their literacy skills when they read to gain further information about the area of study, write accounts of experiments and produce reports of their own conclusions. The subject also includes good examples of numeracy when pupils draw block and line graphs, carry out specific measurements and analyse the data which they collect.

114. OTHER SUBJECTS OR COURSES

114. Information technology

111. By the end of both key stages, standards are above the level of the national expectations. This differs from the previous OFSTED report when standards were 'broadly in line' at Key Stage 1 and below expectations at Key Stage 2. Keyboard skills were underdeveloped and this is still apparent in some individual cases. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils collect, access and interrogate information. They organise, improve and present information for specific purposes and know how to send faxes and e-mails and use CD-ROMs. When carrying out research, they download information and graphics from the Internet and use these in subjects such as science and English. For example, they choose pictures to illustrate their books on *The Hobbit* and visit a web site to gain printouts about the diversity of life on the seashore. They know how to attach a microphone and create a sound file to accompany their work as was seen when two pupils produced accounts of animals for other pupils to use as reference material.

Pupils are adept at applying information technology to appropriate tasks in communicating and when using a control box. They have a good repertoire of information technology terminology and techniques and use their skills independently to overcome difficulties.

112. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils generate and communicate ideas in different forms, for example, they write stories to accompany computer generated pictures about the three bears, use tables and produce graphics which may require precise definition, for example, when filling in elements of a picture with different colours. A high proportion of pupils have well-developed skills. They access programs quickly, often operating them independently, and understand how to pull down menus and make decisions. Many pupils use a mouse to direct a cursor with accuracy, click on icons, retrieve stored information, respond to teaching programs which reinforce mathematical and language skills, type in their own text and know how to name and save their work.

113. Progress is good throughout the school but is slower, although still satisfactory, when pupils do not have as much access to computers because of hardware or software limitations. Progress accelerates in sessions when teachers are very capable, provide direct teaching of skills to the whole class and enable pupils to participate in demonstrations. Usually, there are good opportunities for pupils to practise the skills, in pairs, as follow up activities. Progress continues to be good when adults intervene and help pupils during these occasions. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress especially when assistants and teachers with specialist knowledge support them. Year 1 pupils are confident and enjoy producing portraits and choosing variations. They quickly apply their skills in Year 2 when they change the size of text and learn how to print their work. The curricular content in Year 3 builds successfully on the skills and pupils learn how to maximise and minimise their work, use a spell check and cut and paste when word processing. Progress is particularly good in this year when teachers' expectations are high. For example, pupils were taught how to use CD-ROMS and access multimedia elements. These skills were very productive when Year 4 pupils wanted to research into functions of the body. Very good progress continues in Years 5 with opportunities to enter data and produce spreadsheets, linked to the analysis of costs for a party and the planning of menus. Year 6 pupils apply all their skills and show confidence when, for example, they are preparing a letter to fax to the Science Museum and search the Internet to find a relevant illustration to 'clip on'.

114. Pupils make very good responses. Their behaviour is exemplary especially when they are working independently on computers. They are very enthusiastic, and particularly good at taking responsibility and using their initiative. When encountering problems, they are persistent and endeavour to resolve them. For example, one Year 2 boy struggled to save his picture, 'hang' it in the studio setting and print it. He took instructions from the screen repeatedly and eventually clicked the appropriate icons and directions in the correct sequence. Pupils are very sensible when taking advice from adults. They respond to teachers and learning support assistants with respect and show sensitivity when helping others who are experiencing difficulties. At all ages, pupils work well with a partner and share the equipment sensibly.

115. No specific mention was made of the quality of teaching in the last OFSTED report. The quality of teaching is good in both key stages. In Key Stage 2, fifty percent of the teaching is very good. Strengths in teaching relate to high expectations, effective management and evident subject knowledge

which is conveyed well. All teachers have very positive relationships with pupils and are seeking to incorporate information technology into many curriculum areas. Satisfactory teaching occurs where pupils have a clear idea of what to do. However, intervention by teachers is not entirely sufficient as they are often engaged in teaching the rest of the class a different subject. Good involvement occurs when the information technology is planned as part of the lesson, as occurred in a Year 5 literacy lesson when pupils created their own drama scripts in a group with the support of the teacher. Where there is only one computer in the room, teachers endeavour to make the best use of this resource when teaching a class lesson by involving all pupils in answering questions, even though it is not practical for all to have hands-on experience in that time.

116. The subject now meets the requirements of the National Curriculum as compared to the last inspection. The policy documentation is very detailed and an Internet policy indicates the forward thinking and planning which is taking place. The school is well prepared to implement the government's initiatives in this area. The newly adopted scheme of work from the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority provides a clear outline for each year group and ensures that pupils improve their skills in a systematic way as they move through the school. Assessment procedures are linked with this scheme and individual summary sheets indicate the levels which pupils are reaching. There are few opportunities for pupils to set their own targets and record their progress. Information technology is now being taught as a discrete subject in addition to supporting other subjects. There is some effective cross curricular work which is particularly evident, for example, in English, mathematics, science and art, but this is not specifically defined in the documentation. Present displays and the work in books do not always reflect the pupils' evident competencies.

117. The subject is thoughtfully co-ordinated and innovations, such as the part time employment of a technical expert, who is also involved in staff training and running extra curricular activities, enhance the provision. A comprehensive three-year development plan indicates the direction which the subject is taking. Teachers have acquired the skills to meet the needs of the curriculum and training on a regular basis, arranged by the co-ordinator, enables them to learn about developments in the subject and to become confident in the use of new technology. Resources have been recently improved and the ratio of computers to pupils is now around the national average. There is a good range of software although some sharing of software packages occurs in Year 3. Pupils have the chance to use programmable robots which help them to understand mathematical concepts. The accommodation presents limitations although the best use is made of it. The previous inspection reported that the school intended to provide a computer suite and this is still the case. A designated area is not as feasible as expected. Estimates for the work have proved to be too costly. Good links occur with a local business partnership which has helped to provide Internet access boxes. Key Stage 1 pupils have experienced a visit by staff from a local supermarket which included the chance to use laptop computers and older pupils have had the chance to use the computer suite at the local secondary school.

121.

Religious education

118. In the previous inspection, standards achieved by pupils in religious education were reported as being good for the ages of the pupils throughout the school. In this inspection, the findings are the same and by the time pupils reach the top of the school, their attainment is firmly in advance of expectations of the locally Agreed Syllabus. In Key Stage 2, pupils are familiar with stories about the life of Jesus and stories from the Old Testament. They develop and consolidate well their knowledge and understanding of religion through such ideas as celebration, remembrance, and specialness, including learning about special places, special times and special books. These topics are set not only within the context of Christianity but also in studies of Sikhism and Judaism as well. The recent topic of the Jewish festival of Sukkot which has been studied in Year 5 exemplifies this point. Pupils in Year 5 have made interesting displays representing the garden shelters used in the festival, together with their drawing and writing. In Key Stage 1, pupils are able to understand simple stories in the Christian tradition, and to learn something of other faiths, such as Judaism and Hinduism. In a lesson enjoyed by Year 2 pupils, the celebration of Krishna's birthday, a Hindu tradition, was discussed. Pupils were able to appreciate parallels with their own birthdays, and with the birthday of Jesus, in terms of celebratory elements such as candles, perfumed incense, sweets and presents. They enjoyed looking at an attractive display about a Hindu shrine, and could recall well features told to them on a previous occasion.

119. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in religious education in Key Stage 1. They start to build their knowledge and understanding of stories in the Christian faith and other religious traditions, and they enjoy festivals and times of celebration. They begin to understand that caring and sharing is important and of value. Pupils in Key Stage 2 also make good progress. They develop an increasingly solid grasp of different features of festivals, rites and traditions in the Christian and some other faiths, and learn more about symbolism and ceremonies. They begin to understand the underlying messages of caring and sharing very well. In a lesson in Year 6, looking at the story of Joseph, pupils were helped to deepen their understanding of Joseph and other characters in the story, by making a mood chart for Joseph's possible reactions to the different situations in which he found himself. In turn, this helped in their writing of the story of Joseph in first person diary form.

120. Pupils show good attitudes to the subject. They are interested, and eager to comment and contribute. Pupils are able to remember and report facts they have learned and to explain ideas and symbols. They listen well, enjoy stories, and discuss information.

121. The quality of teaching in the subject is good. It is careful and thorough, with some very imaginative features. In the best teaching, objectives are clear, information is presented in an interesting way, and pupils are encouraged to reflect, compare and contrast. The chosen faiths for study alongside Christianity are Judaism and Hinduism in Key Stage 1 and Judaism and Sikhism in Key Stage 2. There are displays or posters about all of these religions including two most attractive ones depicting aspects of Hinduism. The teachers' knowledge and understanding of major alternative faiths have improved since the last inspection. Assessment is unsatisfactory. In the previous report, it was noted that assessment was undeveloped, and this is still the case. Teachers report on pupils' attainments annually, but there is no whole-school approach to ongoing assessment. Reports show inconsistency in the content of reporting, and some focus more on what the class has covered, or pupils' feelings and sensitivity, rather than on what each individual has learned.

122. The policy and the scheme are both very detailed and clear, and follow the locally Agreed Syllabus carefully. There is also a very good chart showing key words and concepts together with appropriate activities for each topic. Guidelines are given for the use of contemporary literature by topic, and these are very useful indeed. The co-ordinator is able to provide advice and help for colleagues, and she examines planning in each year. She sees the outcomes of pupils' work in displays but has not yet been able to monitor lessons. Resources are good in religious education, with plenty of books, posters, books for staff, and collections of artefacts for each faith studied. Although there were a number of good quality modern books on the different faiths in classrooms around the school, the world religions section of the library was understocked. Pupils visit local churches, Canterbury Cathedral and the Thanet Synagogue, and the school carol service takes place in the parish church. Local clergy visit school to speak to pupils and to take assemblies.

126. Art

123. Due to timetabling factors, no art lessons were observed in Key Stage 1, although several were seen in Key Stage 2. Pupils' art work and displays were scrutinised in both key stages, and teachers' planning was also examined in both stages. The evidence indicates that standards of attainment are above average for the pupils' ages. In the previous inspection, standards in art were average in Key Stage 1 and good at Key Stage 2, so that an improvement has taken place at Key Stage 1. At Key Stage 2, pupils produce very careful observational drawings of a high standard for their ages, they use colour, line and form well in their paintings, and create imaginative patterns in printing and textile work. They are able to mix their own colours, and use a range of media. Some good painting and drawing enhance a science display about decay, produced by Year 6. Tie and dye, weaving and appliqué techniques have been used in fabric work, as well as stencilling. Clay moulding techniques have been used for making "Viking jewellery" and innovative use made of carving cuttlefish bones for the moulds. Pupils have studied the work of famous artists including some from traditions other than Western culture. For example, in a lesson in Year 6 on perspective drawing, pupils had looked at prints of work by Lowry, Van Gogh, Hobbema, Brueghel, Constable, Canaletto, and an Arabic painter. In Key Stage 1, pupils have good drawing and painting skills for their ages, in particular, their observational drawing is very careful and detailed. They have a good sense of line and form. This was shown in an interesting and imaginative exercise which started with observational chalk drawings of trees, then used a viewfinder to focus on small parts and enlarge them to form abstract paintings in the style of Mondrian.

124. Progress in both key stages, including that made by pupils with special educational needs, is good. In Key Stage 1, work shows increasing attention to detail and to line and form, with gradually improving skills. In Key Stage 2, pupils learn an increasingly broad range of techniques and use different media with enjoyment. Across both key stages, pupils are developing an increasing range of knowledge of famous artists and of art and craft traditions from both Western and other heritages.

125. Pupils enjoy their artwork, show good attitudes towards it and are able to discuss and comment on colour, shape and representations in their own work and that of others. They give good attention and care to their work.

126. The quality of teaching is good throughout the school. In lessons observed during the inspection, it was never below satisfactory, while 80 per cent of lessons contained good teaching. Techniques and how to look after tools are specifically and carefully taught. There is good teaching of the use of colour and the place of composition to be seen in pupils' drawing and painting. In the school's previous inspection, demonstration opportunities were missed in some of the teaching, but very good clear demonstration was incorporated in the teaching seen in this inspection. Teachers' knowledge of the subject is generally good, and planning is sound. The subject is sometimes incorporated into topic work, as shown by the drawings and paintings in the science display. There is good evidence of well-developed textile work, and printing, but there was little or no sculpture and use of modelling materials, although these are in the planned Programmes of Study. Teachers make notes for ongoing assessment, and there are useful proformas for end of key stage assessments which form individual subject records. There are specific annual assessments in drawing which are kept in individual portfolios and which make a record of progress for each pupil. Self-assessment is beginning to be encouraged.

127. There is a suitable policy giving information about an adequate range of activities and techniques. There is a good scheme of work that shows good integration of the aspects of the subject. In the school's previous inspection, the policy, scheme and planning for progress were found to be underdeveloped. The subject documentation and planning are now sound and support progress. The co-ordinator examines planning, provides advice, and looks at work produced by pupils. She has not yet had the opportunity of monitoring actual lessons or of teaching with colleagues. A recent experience enjoyed by the whole school was the visit of a textile artist as artist in residence. In a series of workshops, pupils learned new techniques of stencil designing, of appliqué, of painting and dyeing using fabrics and of fabric collage. Resources are good for practical work in the subject and facilities for printing are still being extended. For appreciation of art, the school has a collection of prints of the work of famous artists and of art and craft products of different cultural traditions. Few books about painting and painters were in evidence in the library. Curricular provision in art is broad and balanced.

128.No lessons were observed in Key Stage 2 during the course of the inspection due to the school's arrangements for alternating some subjects weekly or half-termly. However, scrutiny of work on display, in pupils' books and in photographs indicates that pupils' work is better than expected for their age, which is an improvement since the last inspection. At the end of the key stage, pupils produce ideas to re-design familiar situations, such as a local pier, and evaluate them in the light of how their designs will function. When making objects, they show increasing precision. For example, effective links with work on C S Lewis, in the literacy hour, demonstrated this very well. Pupils had developed their own ideas to create fantasy slippers. They were skilfully made and decorated creatively. In Key Stage 1, two lessons were observed in which pupils demonstrated average standards for their age. They are able to generate ideas by rearranging materials and components and can make items by selecting from a range of techniques and materials and join them in various ways. For example, they used plastic mesh to focus on cross-stitching, used masking tape and staplers to join paper to make a bag, used scissors and glue for shaping and attaching different materials when making puppet faces and followed instructions to make models from construction equipment.

129.From scrutiny of pupils' work on display and in photographs, it is evident that most pupils make good progress as they move through the school. In Year 1, pupils incorporated levers into their models to move simple sailing boats, and in Year 2, they progressed to including more advanced movement involving axles and cotton reels for wheels. By Year 4, they were able to design and make various bird feeders, using a wider range of materials and joining techniques, and in Year 5, worked in groups when planning how to make books, and made structures for raising water, which required strengthening to withstand the load. In Year 6, pupils investigated a telephone, by disassembling it, to learn how it functioned.

130.Pupils in Key Stage 1 show a good response in the lessons. They are attentive and listen carefully and are interested and eager to start. They share resources well and offer to help each other, by cutting tape and suggesting ideas to pupils working alongside them. They are aware that teaching staff can only work with one group at a time and show independence in the way they get on with their work. Their behaviour is very good.

131.In Key Stage 1, the quality of teaching is good. This is also indicated in Key Stage 2 from the good quality products scrutinised. Teachers' knowledge and understanding are secure and they have high expectations for independent learning. Methods provide pupils with clear demonstrations of how and what to do, as well as opportunities for them to investigate for themselves. Pupils are well managed so that they remain on task and have access to teachers and classroom assistants in turn. On-going support provides guidance and praise. This enables teachers to assess pupils' progress as they work, through carefully framed questions. In the last inspection, teaching was judged to be satisfactory but, occasionally, links with other subjects were unhelpful and there were insufficient teaching demonstrations to enable some pupils to progress quickly. The inspection findings show an improvement in teaching and such shortcomings were not evident.

132.Design and technology has been a high priority development area for the school since the previous inspection and most aspects have been dealt with successfully. The current policy, which is to be reviewed next year, is operating with modifications. Elements from a national scheme of work are being trialled by some teachers with a view to incorporating them into the school scheme. The policy has some useful planning and evaluation sheets for teachers, and designing and evaluation sheets for pupils. In addition, there is guidance for a range of developing skills, such as those needed for measuring, shaping and joining, when using different materials. However, a balanced approach is not assured in terms of the range of materials and tools used, or in the progression in skills. There is no overall long-term curricular map that identifies the focus for each year group, term by term. There are instances when this lack of detail reflects negatively on pupils' progress. For example, in Year 1, pupils have been making simple umbrellas and although they show good progress in their ability to record instructions the making skills are identical to those in the Reception classes.

133.The co-ordinator has a clear understanding of the subject and is aware of the shortcomings and the need to monitor the transition period closely. Planning is monitored but teaching and pupils' standards are not monitored, other than on an informal basis. The subject expertise of staff is good and has been

effectively supported through in-service training from a county adviser and the co-ordinator. Resources are very good and include special technology trolleys, a microwave for food technology and enough equipment for eight pupils to be involved.

137.

Geography

134. During the inspection, only three lessons of geography were observed, two at Key Stage 1 and one at Key Stage 2. Judgements are based on these lessons, the scrutiny of pupils' work and teachers' planning and records and on discussion with staff and pupils. The indications are that pupils reach average standards for their ages at Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 1. These findings are in line with those of the school's last OFSTED inspection that judged standards to be average throughout the school. At Key Stage 2, pupils show awareness of a range of methods of communication, use an atlas to locate towns, have extensive knowledge of the geography of rivers, understand the water cycle and are aware of how man influences the environment. At Key Stage 1, the pupils can locate places in the school grounds from photographs and sequence the photographs according to how far they are from the school. They talk confidently about occupations on the fictional Isle of Struay, recognise that some are voluntary and appreciate that people in other occupations are paid

135. The pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress at Key Stage 1 and satisfactory progress at Key Stage 2. At both key stages, geographical vocabulary is well developed as are research skills. In the school's last OFSTED report, research skills were said to be underdeveloped. However, throughout the school, higher attaining pupils do not always make the maximum progress of which they are capable as the level of work which they are given is not always well related to their needs. At Key Stage 1, the amount of work which the pupils record is insufficient.

136. Throughout the school, the pupils make a good response to the teaching of geography. The pupils are very keen to answer questions, they enjoy finding things out and are keen to complete their work. They are familiar with classroom routines and settle down to their tasks very quickly. The pupils relate very sympathetically to each other and give support to those who are unhappy. The quality of their behaviour is good.

137. The quality of teaching is good at Key Stage 1 and satisfactory at Key Stage 2. This finding is broadly similar to that of the school's previous OFSTED inspection which described the quality of teaching as "sound to good". At both key stages, the teachers manage and control the pupils very well. In a lesson which exemplified the strengths of the teaching in this subject, the teacher gave a lively introduction which built on the pupils' previous understanding in the subject. The teacher's expectations of the pupils' work, behaviour and response were high and evident to the pupils. Good use of resources, particularly pictures, captured the pupils' attention and skilful questioning checked and developed their understanding. The teacher built the pupils' confidence and self-esteem well by praising and recognising their efforts. Weaknesses in teaching are related to a slowing down in the pace of the lesson and straying too far from the geographical focus of the lesson so that it becomes, in essence, another subject.

138. The co-ordinator is an enthusiastic and knowledgeable teacher who manages the subject effectively, is well aware of its strengths and weaknesses and has ambitious plans, the fruits of which are already evident, to develop it still more. Curricular provision is broad and balanced, with good cross-curricular links and is suitably supported by fieldwork and the provision of learning resources is good. The subject policy and scheme of work are good as are assessment procedures that have improved since the school's previous OFSTED inspection. The subject makes a good contribution to the pupils' cultural development, for example, through the study of St Lucia and a residential visit to France. The co-ordinator monitors teachers' planning but does not have the regular opportunity to support and monitor teaching. The subject action plan lacks sufficient detail in terms of judging the success of its implementation.

139. At the end of both key stages, standards in history are above average for the ages of the pupils. This represents an improvement since the last OFSTED inspection that judged standards to be average across the school. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils demonstrate an increasing depth of knowledge and understanding of aspects of life in Ancient Greece, Ancient Egypt, Roman times, the Vikings and Victorian Britain. They gain a very good insight into ways that peoples lived in the past and the important events and contributions that shaped their lives. Pupils display a developing sense of chronology, use dates accurately and make informed comparisons between different times, for example, the life of pupils in the Victorian era and their own experiences of school. They discriminate between evidence of various periods in history, recognise that it must be carefully interpreted and have a good understanding of the importance of historical sources, for example, books, artefacts, photographs and maps. Their skills in discussing the cause and effect of events in the past are well developed. This was illustrated in a Year 3 lesson about Boudicca's revolt. Pupils were able to discuss the feelings of survivors with considerable maturity for their age and understood how the battle had changed life for both the Celts and the Romans. Pupils organise and communicate their thoughts effectively in discussion, illustration and writing.

140. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils show a developing sense of chronology by using terms concerned with the passing of time. They make perceptive distinctions between aspects of their own lives and the past and show awareness of time by discussing some of the ways in which objects, such as teddy bears, are 'old' and 'new'. Pupils also learn about significant characters in the past like Florence Nightingale and why they are memorable. Good use is also made of local resources when Year 1 visit the seaside as part of their study of the seaside long ago and Year 2 visit Walmer and Deal castles to discover evidence about the past.

141. Across the school, pupils including pupils with special educational needs, make good progress in history. In Key Stage 1, pupils have a good awareness of the features that make things old and new and make good progress in developing their sense of time and change through their own lives and comparison with people in times past. They produce thoughtful responses in discussions and become increasingly competent in communicating their knowledge effectively. As they move through Key Stage 2, pupils improve their ability to organise information and present historical ideas in discussion and writing. They progress well in the level, detail and accuracy of their writing and learn to use dates, names and terminology with increasing precision. In Year 3, pupils understand the impact of invasion, such as the Roman occupation of Britain, Year 4 pupils learn about the arrival and settlement of the Vikings, Year 5 explore Athens and Sparta in their study of the Ancient Greeks and Year 6 examine life in Victorian Britain from a child's perspective. As they progress through the key stage, pupils explore different interpretations of the past, for example, when they discuss the Battle of Marathon, and explore new ways of organising and presenting information. The use of source material and artefacts is carefully developed as pupils move through the school. History is a good support for the teaching of literacy skills, for example, their reading of 'The Odyssey' complements Year 5 pupils' study of the Greeks, and pupils in Year 4 write instructions about making Viking jewellery.

142. The response of pupils to the teaching of history is very good at both key stages. They enjoy developing the detective skills required in history and are increasingly able to take responsibility for their learning as they discover and interpret historical sources. They respond willingly to questions and participate enthusiastically in discussions and practical activities. Pupils work well collaboratively and have constructive relationships with all involved in their learning. They are particularly fascinated by historical artefacts and share resources sensibly and amicably. The high standard of the project work on local history, such as Walmer, Deal and Dover castles and the Romney, Hythe and Dymchurch railway, testifies to their good research skills, initiative and perseverance.

143. The quality of teaching is good at both key stages. The previous OFSTED report deemed teaching to be 'sound overall, although some is satisfactory, with a small amount good'. Teachers have good knowledge and understanding of the periods studied and often successfully convey their own enthusiasm and interest to the pupils. Lessons are planned imaginatively to meet the needs of all pupils, assessment is used constructively and skilful questioning challenges pupils' thinking. Clear guidelines are given for work, behaviour and response. There is a purposeful pace, good emphasis on historical language and

an effective balance between giving pupils information and encouraging them to work through inquiry, interpretation and observation. Resources are used well to stimulate and develop learning and activities are designed to develop pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding as young historians. All teachers use praise and encouragement well to recognise and celebrate pupils' achievements. In a Key Stage 2 lesson, which exemplified many of the strengths of teaching, the teacher brought history alive and successfully conveyed to her pupils the strict regime of the Victorian schoolroom. Her confident presentation, demanding expectations and penetrating questions gained pupils' rapt attention. The activities, such as learning a poem by heart, working a sampler, writing on slates, were well planned with clear historical objectives, fostered a good sense of enquiry among the pupils and resulted in very good progress. Weaker features in the general teaching of the subject include lack of urgency in pace and a failure to insist on full application to work during lessons.

144. Teaching is well supported by a detailed policy that sets out the aims and principles of teaching the subject and has a sound focus on the development of historical skills. It is used in conjunction with the Programmes of Study in the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority documents that provide clear guidelines for assessment in the subject. Teachers' planning shows that due attention is given to the study of different sources of information and to the skills of interpretation and enquiry. As part of a general key issue for action in the last OFSTED report, the school has successfully completed the policy and scheme of work, increased the range of artefacts, extended the variety of teaching skills, clarified assessment procedures and prepared challenging work for higher attaining pupils. There has been a very significant improvement in the quality of provision since the previous inspection.

145. The subject is well led at both key stages. The co-ordinators have a clear view of the future direction of the subject and give professional support to the work of their colleagues. Targets for development include increasing the range of artefacts at Key Stage 1 and revising the policy in line with the new National Curriculum requirements. Monitoring of planning, displays and samples of work takes place but classroom observation is still in the process of development. Resources are very good and are used effectively to support activities and enliven lessons. Imaginative and colourful displays provide a good stimulus for learning in history and enhance the ethos and environment of the school. The local area provides a rich source of information and pupils visit Walmer and Deal castles, the seaside, Chatham Dockyard, a Victorian Day at Dover Town Hall and a Roman Day at the White Cliffs Experience. These visits and visitors to the school are valuable features that contribute well to the broad and balanced curricular provision in history.

Music

146. Pupils reach above average standards of achievement in music. This is an improvement on the standards reported in the last inspection, which were satisfactory. In Key Stage 2, pupils sing well together, with a good regard for melody and pitch, rhythm and tempo, and produce a good tone. They use untuned and tuned instruments to produce simple compositions or to make a beat or ostinato to accompany a tune. In making their compositions, they are able to develop simple systems of graphic notation to enable them to reproduce and modify their work. They are able to identify different instruments, and know about some different styles of music, such as opera, folk-singing, blues, and classical orchestral music. Pupils also develop their responses to music, as part of their appraisal and interpretation of it, and can discuss or express their own ideas of moods created by different musical elements. In a lesson in Year 6, pupils were using these abilities to make chalk pictures and patterns as a visual response to an African folk-song and showed originality and some interesting levels of symbolism in their work. In Key Stage 1, pupils sing with enjoyment and confidence, very tunefully for their ages, and know about the names and sounds of a variety of instruments. They can use these and body percussion to make rhythmic accompaniments to songs and listening music.

147. At Key Stage 1, pupils' good progress is shown in their increasing ability to discern rhythm and beat in music, together with their growing awareness of pitch and dynamics. Through Key Stage 2, pupils become more skilled in the playing of instruments and the making of rhythms, and are able to put together sequences of different sounds to form simple group compositions. They also know that phrases in music may be repeated to form a structure or pattern within a piece of music. Pupils were displaying this understanding in a Year 5 lesson about rondo form. As they become older, pupils become more

aware of how the key musical elements help to produce the mood and feeling of a piece of music and can make appropriate comments. They are also adding to their knowledge of different styles of music and of composers. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress for their previous attainment.

148. Pupils of all ages enjoy their singing and music making, and they like listening to music as well. Their attitudes are good and they engage in lessons with enthusiasm.

149. The quality of teaching in the subject is good. Knowledge and understanding of the subject are sound and often good. Planning is always at least satisfactory and sometimes shows imagination and flair. The content of lessons is well-grounded in the National Curriculum Programmes of Study, and takes good account of the musical elements. The appreciation of music is often well developed in lessons. In the last inspection, expectations were considered to be low at times, but the challenges set in lessons seen in this inspection were appropriately high. The previous inspection also noted that there were no arrangements for assessment, and that achievements recorded were not individual. This point has been satisfactorily addressed in the intervening period, and there is now a school system for assessment in this subject. This is based on a class assessment sheet but there is room for notes and comments on individual performance. There are also optional evaluation proformas for group composition and performance. Self-evaluation sheets for pupils to use themselves are also used sometimes, and special end of key stage assessments are carried out for every pupil.

150. There is a sound policy with useful indications of achievement for each year group. Good guidelines on styles of teaching and learning in the subject, and on curricular planning, are also given in the policy. The scheme of work is detailed and comprehensive. There is, in addition, a very good detailed programme for the appreciation of music for each year group in Key Stage 2. The co-ordinator sees samples of plans, and discusses these with year group teams. She is available to give help and advice to colleagues but has not yet been able to monitor actual lessons. She audits resources, and keeps an action plan for the subject. The quantity and quality of resources are generally good. There are sufficient instruments for class use, although some tuned instruments require repair. There is a good range of tapes and CD-ROMs which covers not only the Western classical heritage, but modern music and music from ethnic traditions as well. Musicians visit the school from time to time, to play for the pupils and to display their instruments or to conduct a workshop. There is a school choir with a membership of about forty pupils. The choir sings at school and local festivals and services and to the elderly at Christmas, and has sung at the Marlowe Theatre in Canterbury. There is a small percussion group, and a beginners' recorder group. Curricular provision in music is broad and balanced.

Physical education

151. Pupils reach above average standards for their ages at Key Stage 2 and at Key Stage 1. This judgement is an improvement on the findings of the school's last OFSTED inspection which found standards to be "average throughout the school". At Key Stage 2, the pupils trap and control a football well and pass it with good levels of accuracy. In netball, they pass the ball successfully in different ways and show good catching skills. They make interesting and varied shapes using different parts of their bodies to balance on and show good finishing positions in their gymnastic work. Although swimming was not observed during the inspection, the evidence indicates that most pupils swim at least 25 metres competently before they leave the school. At Key Stage 1, the pupils respond well to music when creating dance sequences which are often confident and imaginative and which express mood and feelings well. They show good co-ordination when travelling by making patterns of movement involving hopping and skipping patterns and throw a ball or a bean bag accurately. At both key stages, the pupils' have a clear understanding of some of the effects which exercise has on the body but their skills in making the best use of space are varied.

152. Throughout the school, the pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress. In Year 6, the rate of progress is very good. The pupils demonstrate and improve sequences of movements of increasing complexity in gymnastics with growing co-ordination. In games, they show developing skills in marking, dodging and team work. In one lesson, the pupils made clear progress in their abilities to control a ball as they built on their skills of using their feet and developed the use of their chests and thighs for the same purpose. Good progress in swimming is indicated by the number of pupils who start as non-swimmers and then gain confidence and capability in the water. The pupils'

vocabulary is developed well as they are taught to use the appropriate technical terms applicable to this subject.

153. At Key Stage 1, the pupils make a good response to the teaching of physical education and, at Key Stage 2, their response is very good. The school's previous OFSTED inspection described the pupils' attitudes as "generally good". The pupils show considerable enthusiasm for these lessons. They listen carefully to the teachers and apply themselves to their work with sustained energy and concentration. The pupils behave very well, act safely and take good care of their learning resources. The quality of relationships in physical education lessons is very good.

154. The quality of teaching is good at both key stages. No secure comparison with the findings of the school's last OFSTED inspection is possible as teaching was judged to be "mainly sound to very good". Throughout the school, the teachers have particular strengths in planning their lessons, in their expectations of the pupils, the way they manage and control the pupils and in their use of time and resources. The teachers work successfully with a learning support assistant who is well qualified in physical education and who supports the pupils very effectively. However, the pupils' are not always encouraged to evaluate their own and others' performance sufficiently in order to improve. In a dance lesson that exemplified many of the strengths of the teaching throughout the school, the lesson was well planned with good objectives. The teacher showed good knowledge and understanding of the subject in teaching the skills required for improvement. The teacher's high expectations of the pupils were clearly evident in the way in which the pupils were required to apply themselves to their work and in the high quality of the behaviour which was required from them. The teacher demonstrated movements well, used pupils effectively for the same purpose and generated a real sense of enthusiasm and enjoyment. Learning resources were very well used and the pupils made good progress.

155. The subject is temporarily managed by a number of staff who take responsibility for differing aspects of it and the Headteacher keeps a general oversight of it. This arrangement is effective and is due to the fact that the school is in the process of appointing a new physical education co-ordinator. There is clear evidence that the subject has been well managed in the past. The judgement of the school's previous OFSTED inspection, supports this conclusion. Curricular provision is broad and balanced and the statutory requirement to teach swimming at Key Stage 2 is met. There is a good policy statement and effective planning that are the basis for good progress in the pupils' learning. At the time of the school's last OFSTED inspection resources were said to be adequate and extracurricular activities limited. Resources are now judged to be good and extracurricular provision is seen as very good. The school's field, hall and area of hard surfaced play area support the teaching of the subject well. Assessment procedures are satisfactory. Physical education makes a good contribution to the pupils' social and moral development as they learn to work as part of a team. The teaching of physical education is not monitored on a regular basis and the subject lacks a detailed formal action plan.

156. The school offers the competitive sports of football, netball, short tennis and swimming as extracurricular activities according to the season. Clubs are generally held for fifty minute sessions. Four teachers run these activities and they are assisted by a number of adult helpers and by parents who provide transport to away fixtures. Pupils aged from seven to 11 years of age attend the clubs and a total of 35 pupils attend the most popular activity. Both boys and girls take part in all activities. The school takes part in competitive football, netball and swimming against other schools and has won trophies for football.

160.

PART C: INSPECTION DATA

161. SUMMARY OF INSPECTION EVIDENCE

The inspection was carried out by a team of five inspectors who spent a total of 24 inspector days in the school. Time spent observing teaching, scrutinising the work of pupils and checking their attainment by working with them during the inspection - 85 hours. 11 hours at Pre Key Stage 1, 24 hours at Key Stage 1 and 50 hours at Key Stage 2. In addition, a further 48 hours were spent on the inspection activities listed below.

- Ninety eight lessons or parts of lessons were observed as were a number of registration periods, assemblies, playtimes, lunchtimes and extracurricular activities;
- discussions were held with all teaching staff and some non-teaching staff;
- many pupils were heard to read and were questioned about their mathematical knowledge and understanding;
- three samples of pupils' work across the full range of ability in all year groups were inspected in addition to work examined during lessons;
- all available school documentation was analysed;
- attendance records, pupils' records kept by the school and teachers' planning documents were examined;
- the budget figures were inspected;
- discussions were held with pupils, parents and governors;
- a parents' meeting was held and the views of the 13 parents at this meeting and those of the 48 families who responded to a questionnaire were taken into account.

162. DATA AND INDICATORS

162. 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 – Y6	425	7	125	37

162. Teachers and classes

162. Qualified teachers (YR – Y6)

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent):	16
Number of pupils per qualified teacher:	26.57

162. Education support staff (YR – Y6)

Total number of education support staff:	15
Total aggregate hours worked each week:	302

Average class size: 31

162. **Financial data**

Financial year: 1997/98

£

Total Income 648148

Total Expenditure 651475

Expenditure per pupil 1511.54

Balance brought forward from previous year 14931

Balance carried forward to next year 11604

162. **PARENTAL SURVEY**

Number of questionnaires sent out: 430
 Number of questionnaires returned: 48

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	46	52	2	0	0
I would find it easy to approach the school with questions or problems to do with my child(ren)	52	44	2	2	0
The school handles complaints from parents well	33	51	12	4	0
The school gives me a clear understanding of what is taught	38	52	4	6	0
The school keeps me well informed about my child(ren)'s progress	34	50	8	6	2
The school enables my child(ren) to achieve a good standard of work	52	46	2	0	0
The school encourages children to get involved in more than just their daily lessons	40	47	13	0	0
I am satisfied with the work that my child(ren) is/are expected to do at home	41	41	10	8	0
The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on my child(ren)	49	45	2	4	0
The school achieves high standards of good behaviour	64	26	8	2	0
My child(ren) like(s) school	57	41	2	0	0

162. **Other issues raised by parents**

A number of parents commented on the good quality of education that they felt that the school provides. Other parents stated that they would like more information about the progress made by their children and that children were not always given sufficiently clear instructions about homework.