

INSPECTION REPORT

Sibertswold CE(C) Primary School

Shepherdswell
Dover

LEA area: Kent

Unique Reference Number: 118691
Inspection Number: 189267

Headteacher: Mrs. J. Vye

Reporting inspector: Mike Capper
OIN23239

Dates of inspection: October 11th – 14th 1999

Under OFSTED contract number: 707493

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
Type of control:	Voluntary Controlled
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Coldred Road, Shepherdswell, Dover, Kent CT15 7LF
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Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr. M. Errington
Date of previous inspection:	May 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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Alison Cartlidge	Mathematics Science Art Design and technology Music Religious Education	Attainment and Progress Teaching Curriculum and Assessment Special Educational Needs
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MAIN FINDINGS

What the school does well

- The headteacher is an exceptionally strong and effective leader and is well supported by governors in developing and managing the school.
- Members of staff create an ethos that strongly supports learning and enables pupils to develop high self-esteem and become responsible members of the school community.
- The quality of teaching is good in over a half of lessons and is never less than satisfactory
- Pupils achieve good standards and make good progress in art and design and technology. They make good progress in reading and science in Key Stage 1 and in English and mathematics in Key Stage 2.
- The teaching of personal and social skills for children under five is good.
- Arrangements for assessing pupils' attainment and monitoring their personal development are very good.
- Very well trained learning support assistants make a very good contribution to pupils' learning.
- Parents feel valued and well informed by the school and are very supportive of its work.
- There are very good links with industry and the local community.

Where the school has weaknesses

- I. Boys achieve less well than girls in writing
- II. Pupils' attainment in religious education is below the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus.
- III. The grouping of pupils for literacy and numeracy is less effective in Key Stage 1 than it is in Key Stage 2.
- IV. In science the number of pupils achieving the higher Levels 3 and 5 by the end of each key stage is below average.

The school has many strengths and few weaknesses. The governors' action plan will set out how the weaknesses identified during the inspection are to be tackled. The plan 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 satisfactory progress since the last inspection, with issues identified at that time being successfully addressed. Schemes of work and policies have been introduced for all subjects and all pupils now have equal access to the curriculum. Teachers plan work which is carefully matched to the needs of individual pupils and good use is made of assessment information to help plan work. Standards of attainment and progress have been raised in art and design and technology. At the end of Key Stage 2, attainment in English, mathematics and science remains broadly similar to that found in

the last inspection. Although attainment in Key Stage 1 is lower in writing and mathematics than previously, this is due to changes in the intake of pupils rather than any deterioration in the quality of education provided by the school. Indeed, the quality of teaching has improved significantly since the last inspection. The present headteacher has implemented many initiatives since her appointment in 1997, with a clear focus on raising attainment. Many of these initiatives such as the improved arrangements for planning and assessment have not been in place long enough to have a significant impact on attainment. The school has clear and realistic targets and priorities, which include some of the issues identified during the week of inspection. All members of staff are committed to further raising attainment and the school is in a very strong position to further improve the quality of education it provides.

· **Standards in subjects**

This table shows the standards achieved by 11 year olds in 1999 based on the National Curriculum tests:

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

· Standards of attainment vary considerably from year-to-year according to the number of pupils with special educational needs in each year group.

· Inspection findings are that by the age of five, children achieve satisfactory standards and make good progress in personal and social development, knowledge and understanding of the world and creative development. They make satisfactory progress in language and literacy, mathematics and physical development, although, by the age of five, their attainment remains below the expectations of the nationally recognised 'Desirable Outcomes for learning'.

· By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' attainment is in line with national averages in English overall. Their attainment is better in reading than in writing, where it is below average. Pupils' attainment is in line with national averages in science but below national averages in mathematics. A high percentage of the present Year 2 class has been identified as having special educational needs.

By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' attainment is in line with national averages in English, mathematics and science. Throughout the school, pupils achieve good standards in art and design and technology and satisfactory standards in all other subjects, with the exception of religious education where pupils' attainment does not meet the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus.

In Key Stage 1, pupils make good progress in reading and science and satisfactory progress in writing and mathematics. In Key Stage 2, pupils make good progress in English and mathematics and satisfactory progress in science. Throughout the school,

progress is good in art and design and technology, unsatisfactory in religious education and satisfactory in all other subjects.

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• **Quality of teaching**

Teaching in	Under 5	5 – 7 years	7 – 11 years
English	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Good
Mathematics	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Science		Good	Satisfactory
Information technology		Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Religious education		Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Other subjects	Good	Satisfactory	Satisfactory

Teaching is satisfactory or better in all lessons, with 55 per cent of lessons good. Teaching is consistently good in art and design and technology at both key stages and in science and physical education at Key Stage 1 and English at Key Stage 2.

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

• **Other aspects of the school**

Aspect	Comment
Behaviour	Good. Pupils are well behaved and work hard in class.
Attendance	Good. Attendance rates are above the national average. Pupils are very happy at school and arrive punctually.
Ethos*	Good. Relationships are very good throughout the school. There is a very strong commitment to raising standards of attainment.
Leadership and management	Very good. The school has excellent procedures for monitoring the effectiveness of its work.
Curriculum	Satisfactory. The curriculum for children under five and pupils in Key Stages 1 and 2 is broad and balanced although the time allocated to some subjects is lower than average.
Pupils with special educational needs	Good. Pupils identified as having special educational needs make good progress. Provision is well managed.
Spiritual, moral, social & cultural development	Overall good. The school gives pupils many good opportunities for moral and social development through lessons and a well-structured programme of personal and social education. Pupils are given sound opportunities to improve their spiritual awareness. Cultural development is satisfactory.
Staffing, resources and accommodation	Overall, good. All members of staff are given excellent opportunities to attend training courses. Accommodation is well maintained and kept very clean. Resources are

· **KEY ISSUES FOR ACTION**

In order to improve the quality of education provided by the school the headteacher, staff and governing body should:

Improve boys' attainment in writing by

- X. giving a greater priority to the teaching of writing in literacy lessons, including ensuring that there is a balance between 'shared reading' and 'shared writing' activities;
- XI. reviewing how handwriting skills are taught.

(paragraphs 7, 96, 101, 102, 109)

Raise attainment and improve progress in religious education by

- XII. allocating more time to the teaching of the subject;
- XIII. ensuring that members of staff clearly distinguish between religious education and acts of collective worship in their planning;
- XIV. ensuring the scheme of work is followed by teachers when planning work.

(paragraphs 9, 11, 39, 186, 187, 188, 189, 190, 191, 192)

Improve the effectiveness of groupings for literacy and numeracy at Key Stage 1 by

- XV. ensuring that groups are of a manageable size and do not contain too wide a range of abilities;
- XVI. monitoring the effectiveness of different groups.

(paragraphs 12, 30, 104, 116, 119)

Increase the time allocated to the teaching of science to raise attainment at the higher Levels 3 and 5 in science by ensuring that sufficient time is allocated to the teaching of the subject.

(paragraphs 39, 124, 125, 134)

In addition to the key issues above, the following areas for improvement should be considered for inclusion in the action plan. These refer to weaknesses identified in paragraphs 31, 119, 154 and 155

- XVII. ensuring that geography is given greater emphasis in joint history and geography topics.
- XVIII. making more effective use of the additional teacher for supporting work in numeracy;

Introduction

Characteristics of the school

1. Sibbertswold Church of England Primary School is situated in the village of Shepherdswell which is a small rural community in the county of Kent. The school is housed in modern buildings. The majority of pupils attending the school live in Shepherdswell or one of the surrounding villages, with some parents choosing to send their children to the school from outside the catchment area. There are 146 boys and girls in the school and they are taught in five mixed-age classes. Children are admitted into the school at the beginning of the year in which they become five years old, with younger children initially attending for mornings only. At the time of inspection there were 14 children aged under five in the reception class, 9 of whom attend part-time. Tests taken when pupils start school confirm that attainment on entry is below average. Many children attend a playgroup in the village before starting school. Nine per cent of pupils are entitled to free school meals, which is below the national average. There are 41 pupils on the school's special needs' register, which is above the national average. Two pupils have a statement of special educational need. All pupils come from homes where English is the first language.

2. There have been several staff changes since the last inspection in May 1996. The present headteacher was appointed in September 1997. The number of pupils on roll fluctuates throughout the year with the school population becoming increasingly transient as families seek work and housing in other areas. The number of pupils identified as having special educational needs has more than doubled since the last inspection.

3. The school's main aims are 'to provide every individual child with the opportunity to learn and develop to their full potential, using a range of teaching strategies which enable teachers to cater for all children whatever their ability'.

4. The school's main priorities in the current year are to:

- Successfully implement the National Numeracy Strategy;
- Ensure the comprehensive teaching of the science curriculum;
- Improve the standards achieved in creative writing, particularly targeting the boys.

- **Key indicators**
- **Attainment at Key Stage 1**¹

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for latest reporting year:	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1998	8	11	19
	1999	8	5	13

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	Boys	7(7)	7(7)	8(7)
	Girls	5(10)	5(10)	5(8)
	Total	12(17)	12(17)	13(15)
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	92(85)	92(85)	100(75)
	National	82(80)	83((81)	87(84)

Teacher Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	Boys	7(7)	8(7)	7(7)
	Girls	5 (10)	5(8)	5(11)
	Total	12(17)	13(15)	12(18)
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	92(85)	100(75)	92(90)
	National	82(81)	86(85)	87(84)

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	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
for latest reporting year:	1998	11	11	22
	1999	14	10	24

National Curriculum Test Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	Boys	11(4)	11(5)	12(4)
	Girls	8(6)	7(5)	8(7)
	Total	19(10)	18(10)	20(11)
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	79(45)	76(45)	84(50)
	National	70(65)	69(59)	78(69)

Teacher Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	Boys	12(5)	11(6)	12(5)
	Girls	7(8)	7(7)	7(8)
	Total	19(13)	18(13)	19(13)
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	79(59)	75(59)	79(59)
	National	68(65)	69(65)	75(71)

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² Percentages in parentheses refer to the year before the latest reporting year

Attendance

Percentage of half days (sessions) through absence for the latest reporting year:

		%
Authorised Absence	School	5.3
	National comparative	5.7
Unauthorised absence	School	0.0
	National comparative	0.5

Exclusions

Number of exclusions of pupils (of statutory age) during the previous year: 1998/99

	Number
Fixed period	2
Permanent	0

Quality of teaching

Percentage of teaching observed which is:

	%
Very good or better	0
Satisfactory or better	100
Less than satisfactory	0

PART A: ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Educational standards achieved by pupils at the school

Attainment and progress

5. Standards of attainment vary considerably from year to year according to the number of pupils with special educational needs in each year group. In addition, about ten per cent of the school population changes each year due to families moving from the village.

6. Children enter the school with attainment that is below average in language and literacy, mathematics and personal and social development. Scores in tests used when the children first start school confirm this. The attainment of children by the age of five meets the expectations of the nationally recognised desirable outcomes for learning in personal and social development, knowledge and understanding of the world and creative development. Children make good progress in these areas of learning. They make satisfactory progress in language and literacy, mathematics and physical development but remain below expectations by the age of five. Attainment of children under five is lower than at the time of the last inspection when there was a greater number of higher attaining children in the year group.

7. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' attainment is overall in line with national averages in English. Pupils' attainment is better in reading than in writing, where attainment is below average. Pupils' attainment is in line with national averages in science but below national averages in mathematics. The current Year 2 group contains a high number of lower attaining pupils with a third of pupils on the school's register of special educational needs. In the National Curriculum end of key stage tests in 1999, pupils' attainment was high in reading, well above average in writing and above average in mathematics when compared with all schools and with similar schools. In Year 2 in 1999, there was a greater number of higher attaining pupils than usual taking the end of key stage tests and the school acknowledges that test results in this academic year are likely to be lower.

8. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' attainment is in line with national averages in English, mathematics and science. In the National Curriculum end of key stage tests in 1999, pupils' attainment was above average in mathematics and average in English when compared with all schools and with similar schools. In science, results were average when compared with all schools and below average compared with similar schools. The number of pupils achieving the higher Level 5 in science was below average.

9. Throughout the school, pupils are in line with national expectations in information technology but below the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. They achieve good standards of attainment in art and design and technology and satisfactory standards in history, geography music and physical education.

10. At both key stages boys consistently gain lower results than girls in writing. There is no significant difference in the attainment of boys and girls in other subjects.

11. Since the last inspection in 1996, pupils' standards of attainment in English, mathematics and science have varied considerably from year to year and it is not possible to identify a trend. Since the last inspection attainment has improved in art and design and technology but dropped in information technology and religious education. The lowering of standards in information technology is due to the increase in requirements for the subject. In religious education it is due to insufficient time being allocated to the subject. The school has maintained satisfactory standards in geography, history, music and physical education.

12. Pupils make good progress in reading and science at Key Stage 1, and English and mathematics at Key Stage 2. Pupils make satisfactory progress in mathematics and writing skills in Key Stage 1. Progress in these areas is slower in Key Stage 2 because the large group sizes for literacy and numeracy lessons means it is difficult for teachers to meet the needs of all of the pupils all of the time. At both key stages pupils make good progress in art and design and technology. They make unsatisfactory progress in religious education and satisfactory progress in all other subjects. Higher attaining pupils make similar progress to other pupils in both key stages. Teachers take good account of their needs when planning work. This is an improvement from the time of the last inspection when teachers often provided insufficiently challenging work.

13. Pupils who have been identified as having special educational needs receive very good support from learning support assistants. They make good progress in both key stages with many pupils achieving national expectations by the end of both key stages. They are consistently provided with carefully planned work that meets their individual needs. This is an improvement from the time of the last inspection when their progress was judged to be sound.

14. Standards of literacy are weak at Key Stage 1 and satisfactory at Key Stage 2. Throughout the school pupils read well with good expression but younger pupils find it difficult to write competently for a range of purposes. However, teachers provide many opportunities for pupils to develop these skills in subjects other than English.

15. Standards of numeracy are below average at Key Stage 1 and satisfactory at Key Stage 2. Several of the younger pupils have a weak knowledge of number and do not understand the need for accuracy when taking measurements. Pupils at Key Stage 2 are given good opportunities to make use of their numeracy skills particularly during investigative science.

16. The school has set realistic targets for improving literacy and numeracy standards throughout the school.

• **Attitudes, behaviour and personal development**

17. Pupils' attitudes, behaviour and personal development are good. This is a strength of the school and makes a good contribution to the standards achieved by pupils.

18. Many children have poor personal and social skills when they start school. By the age of five, most children behave well, although a few get over excited and find it difficult to listen to the teacher in whole class sessions. They develop sound attitudes to their work and settle well in to school life, becoming happy and confident. Children are enthusiastic about their schoolwork, try hard in all activities and learn to co-operate with each other. They show respect for property, as well as care and concern for each other and develop a

sound understanding of the difference between right and wrong. Children have good relationships with adults in the class but find it hard to work independently when required to do so by a particular task.

19. Throughout the school, pupils have good attitudes to learning. Most take a keen interest in their work and show sustained concentration, particularly at Key Stage 2. They listen carefully to their teachers and follow instructions readily. They persevere with their tasks and take a pride in their finished work. As they grow older, pupils take more responsibility for the organisation of their own work and undertake research confidently. For instance, pupils in Year 5 researched and modified their project in design and technology, using prototypes and experiments in order to test 'fitness for purpose'.

20. Pupils' behaviour is good, overall. The school's success in promoting good behaviour is very evident by the time pupils reach Year 6. They show consideration for others in the playground, and their good behaviour during lessons has a positive impact on their progress. Pupils show care and respect for the building, equipment and resources. There were no incidents of bullying during the inspection, and all supervisory staff carefully follow the school's anti-bullying policy.

21. Very good relationships between pupils and with their teachers add to the strength of pupils' learning. Pupils are considerate to one another, and friendly and courteous to adults. They work well together in lessons and support each other with help and advice when necessary. For example, during a literacy lesson Year 4/5 pupils worked well together, brainstorming ideas.

22. All pupils are expected to take on responsibilities as soon as they start school, with children under five taking the register to the office and helping to tidy up at the end of activities. As they progress through school, they take more responsibility and develop their personal initiative. This is actively managed by teachers, who match particular positions of responsibility to pupils' developmental needs, where this is appropriate. By the time pupils have reached Years 5 and 6, they are responsible for the library, anti-litter patrols, ensuring the issue and return of playground equipment and helping younger pupils in a variety of ways. Some are also elected as 'house captains'. These are proud to be valued members of the school community and enjoy the status this brings.

23. Since the last inspection, the school has increased the provision of personal and social education, and now gives all pupils equality of opportunity. This, together with its consistently implemented policies, has contributed significantly to pupils' high standards of behaviour and relationships and their subsequent personal development.

• **Attendance**

24. Pupils' attendance is good. It is above the national average, and has been maintained consistently since the last inspection. Illness or holidays cause most absences and the school endeavours to discourage term time holidays. Punctuality is good. These good standards of attendance and punctuality have a positive impact on pupils' attainment and progress.

Quality of education provided

Teaching

25. The quality of teaching is never less than satisfactory, with fifty five per cent of lessons being good. The school has improved the quality of teaching from the time of the last inspection, when twenty per cent of teaching was found to be unsatisfactory. Teaching is consistently good in art and design and technology at both key stages and in science and physical education at Key Stage 1 and English at Key Stage 2.

26. The teaching of children under five is satisfactory overall, with good teaching in personal and social education, knowledge and understanding of the world and creative development. This is similar to that found at the time of the last inspection.

27. Pupils with special educational needs are given very good support in class. Teachers carefully plan work matched to individual needs and this enables them to make good progress particularly in English and mathematics. This is an improvement from the time of the last inspection and parents are pleased with the sensitive way pupils with special educational needs are helped.

28. At both key stages, teachers have at least a sound knowledge of the subjects they teach with a good knowledge being demonstrated at the end of Key Stage 2. They are careful to use the correct vocabulary when teaching pupils. For example, in a Key Stage 2 science lesson, the teacher used words such as 'nerves', 'muscle' and 'tissues' when discussing the human body.

29. Teachers have appropriate expectations of what pupils should achieve and give them challenging work. They have a clear understanding of the expectations of the literacy and numeracy hours and plan carefully using the recommended formats. Lesson planning is consistently good and nearly always includes detail of what pupils of differing prior attainment are expected to learn.

30. Pupils are grouped according to prior attainment in literacy and mathematics. This is effective at Key Stage 2 in helping teachers to match work more closely to pupils needs. It is less effective at Key Stage 1, where the teaching groups are large and some pupils are unable to work independently. This makes it more difficult for teachers to meet the needs of all pupils and consequently progress over time is slower in Key Stage 1 than it is in Key Stage 2.

31. In Key Stage 2, higher attaining pupils are given additional support in small withdrawal groups. This is very effective in literacy where groups of higher attaining Year 5 and 6 pupils are given challenging work closely linked to the work of the rest of their year group. It is less effective in numeracy where the pupils who are from Years 3 and 4 are drawn from two different classes. This makes it difficult for the teacher to plan work to match the topics being studied in both classes.

32. Teachers use questioning effectively in discussions. This is particularly evident at the end of Key Stage 2, where questioning is very rigorous and the teacher has high expectations of pupils' answers.

33. All teachers are well organised and prepare well for lessons. For example, at Key Stage 2 teachers provide individual resource boxes for the different groups in literacy and numeracy lessons and this saves time by providing pupils with everything they need.

34. Throughout the school, there is a satisfactory balance between teacher-led, group and individual work and time is used effectively in most lessons. However, occasionally teachers allow too long for an activity and this means that pupils become restless and do not fully concentrate. In the best lessons, pupils are given clear guidance on the purpose of the work and its relevance to everyday life. Short discussions at the end of lessons help to reinforce what has been learnt and enable pupils to consider what needs to be done next.

35. Relationships between teachers and pupils continue to be good. Teachers are kind and caring and work hard to develop pupils' self esteem. They are enthusiastic about the subjects they teach and on most occasions manage pupils effectively. However, in some English and mathematics lessons in Key Stage 1, when teachers are working with pupils from several classes, pupils are not all kept on task and as a result some time is wasted.

36. Day-to-day assessment of pupils' work is very good. Teachers regularly mark pupils' work and give good verbal feedback to pupils during lessons. Written comments in pupils' books give good detail of why work is good or what needs to be improved. In addition teachers carry out informative evaluations of all lessons and use the information this provides to plan future work. Pupils throughout the school are involved successfully in setting their own targets for improvement.

37. The provision for homework is good. Pupils take reading books home and are given other tasks each week. The amount of homework expected increases as pupils get older. In response to concerns raised by parents the headteacher has recently reviewed the homework policy and teachers now provide more time for pupils to complete tasks. These activities help parents to become very involved in their children's education and help pupils to consolidate skills and learn new facts. Most parents are now happy with the amount of homework their children receive.

The curriculum and assessment

38. The curriculum provided for children under five is satisfactory and provides a sound foundation for children entering the statutory years of education. Children are provided with appropriate experiences, and a very high priority is given to developing children's personal and social skills. Assessment of younger children's attainment and progress is very good. When children first start school an assessment is used to identify needs, and detailed records of children's progress are kept. Ongoing assessment is used carefully to decide what needs to be taught next.

39. Overall, the curriculum is broad and balanced and includes all the subjects of the National Curriculum as well as religious education and drugs and sex education. However, the time allocated for religious education is insufficient to meet the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. Whilst standards in other subjects are at least satisfactory, the heavy emphasis on mathematics and English at the end of Key Stage 2 limits progress in some of the other subjects, particularly in science and religious education, where the time allocation is low. Nevertheless, pupils are prepared well for the next stage of their education. The school now has a carefully thought out approach to developing pupils' personal, social and health education and makes satisfactory arrangements for the teaching of swimming.

40. There are satisfactory systems for planning the curriculum showing when different

topics are to be taught. The school has appropriate schemes of work for all subjects and the quality of teachers' medium-term planning is at least satisfactory with good detail included in the plans for Key Stage 1. This is an improvement from the time of the last inspection when curriculum planning was often unsatisfactory and not all subjects had schemes of work. Subject policy documents are regularly reviewed to reflect work in the school accurately.

41. The school provides a very good range of extracurricular activities including football, netball, board games and recorders. These are well attended and enjoyed by pupils. There are suitable opportunities for pupils to take part in competitive sport. The school organises football and netball matches against other schools. Pupils take part in an annual sports day as well as in team games during physical education lessons.

42. All pupils have equal access to the curriculum and the provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. At the time of the last inspection this was not the case. Pupils are now given very effective support in class from learning support assistants, particularly in English and mathematics. This enables pupils with special educational needs to make good progress. The school is complying fully with the requirements of the special needs' Code of Practice. The special needs' register is kept up to date and there are very thorough systems for tracking pupils' progress and monitoring their work. However, the quality of individual education plans varies, and some targets for what pupils should learn are insufficiently specific.

43. Assessment arrangements for pupils in Key Stages 1 and 2 are very good. There is a very comprehensive planning and assessment policy providing teachers with clear guidance on what is expected. The school makes very effective use of standardised testing to monitor pupils' attainment and progress over time. Teachers use information gained from the standardised tests to set realistic targets for pupils' attainment by the end of the academic year. Teachers make very useful evaluations at the end of all lessons and this information is successfully used to help plan future work. At the time of the last inspection the use of assessment to help plan future work was poor. At Key Stage 2, pupils take home a monthly assessment summary to involve pupils and their parents in monitoring progress. Parents appreciate the amount of information they are given on their children's progress.

• **Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development**

44. Overall, the provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. As at the time of the last inspection, pupils are given sound opportunities to develop spiritual awareness and to think about ideas and issues that affect them personally. This is achieved through lessons, informal discussion and assemblies. Topics in the agreed syllabus are covered in religious education lessons, but the low time allocation for the subject means that coverage often lacks depth. Pupils have opportunities to explore Christianity, Judaism and Sikhism and to learn about various values and beliefs. However, this focuses largely on learning facts rather than exploring the significance or meaning of the various faiths. Assemblies are thoughtful and pupils are encouraged to think about their own lives and to reflect on the example of others. Younger children are encouraged to explore the world around them. During the inspection, there were several examples of children under the age of five experiencing awe and wonder. For example, there was gasp of amazement when children were shown the outcome of a simple experiment in an art lesson.

45. Provision for pupils' moral development is very good. At the time of the last inspection it was judged to be sound. Members of staff are excellent role models and constantly teach worthwhile values and remind pupils to apply them. For example, pupils are taught to take turns and share equipment with each other. Parents are pleased with the positive and caring attitudes encouraged by the school. Pupils are very successfully taught to respect each other regardless of ability, gender or home background. There are very positive rules that successfully encourage good behaviour from the pupils at all times. All pupils are involved in drawing up class rules which they are keen to follow. Pupils are aware of what constitutes acceptable and unacceptable behaviour and, by the age of five, most appreciate the difference between right and wrong. Opportunities to talk about moral issues are well taken in lessons. For example, pupils in Years 5 and 6 talked about the meaning of 'tolerance' and intolerance' in the context of both school and the wider community

46. The provision the school makes for pupils' social development has improved since the last inspection and is now very good. Many pupils start school with weak social skills, but by the end of Year 6 pupils are well-adjusted, friendly and responsible members of the school community. This is largely due to the consistent approach which members of staff take towards developing pupils' social skills. Teachers work hard to foster good relationships between pupils who are courteous and helpful to visitors. Pupils regularly raise money for local charities and take part in a good range of visits, for example, to museums, historic houses and parks. All pupils in Key Stage 2 have opportunities to go on residential visits. These activities enhance the curriculum and broaden pupils' social awareness. Pupils are given good opportunities to develop an understanding of their own role as part of the school community and they happily take on responsibility for aspects of school. Many pupils are monitors, for example taking responsibility for looking after the library or giving out milk at playtime. Teachers take great care in ensuring that responsibilities are carefully matched to the individual needs of pupils and help them to develop socially.

47. Pupils' cultural development is satisfactory. The school has worked hard to address the weaknesses identified in the last inspection and pupils are now provided with appropriate experiences to enable them to appreciate the culture of their own and other communities. They learn about different sorts of art and celebrate different festivals. Pupils occasionally celebrate festivals from other faiths. Visitors to school such as authors and artists make a good contribution to pupils' cultural development and help pupils to appreciate the richness of their own cultural heritage. Attractive displays and interesting artefacts contribute effectively to pupils' understanding of multicultural customs and beliefs.

48. A good feature of pupils' cultural development is the close links that the school has established with a school in France. This has a big impact on life in school and helps pupils develop knowledge of a culture that differs from their own. For example, pupils learn French and last year put on a 'French Show' as part of a social evening for friends of the school.

· **Support, guidance and pupils' welfare**

49. The school provides good care, support and guidance for pupils, which has a positive impact on their confidence and ability to involve themselves effectively in all aspects of learning and school life. Progress and personal development are monitored carefully, and parents of Key Stage 2 pupils receive assessment reports monthly. They

are also able to talk to teachers, informally whenever they have a concern. All pupils set targets for themselves, and they are involved in subsequently monitoring how well they have achieved these targets. These very good procedures are a strength, and an indication of the school's commitment to pupils and parents.

50. Procedures to promote discipline and good behaviour are very good. Issues are dealt with fairly and firmly, and pupils know that the school has high expectations of their behaviour. There are clear procedures to deal with aggression or bullying, which includes parental involvement. Parents express confidence in the school's procedures, and incidents of bullying are uncommon. There is good provision for supervision at playtime and lunchtime, when competent and well-trained staff and supervisors monitor pupils' activities effectively. The school has good procedures for monitoring attendance and reports any concerns to the appropriate agencies.

51. Child protection arrangements are thorough and a named person has the designated responsibility for contacting support agencies. All members of staff are aware of the school's policy and the procedures to be followed. Fire safety, first aid and medical arrangements are also satisfactory. Governors and staff are alert to health and safety issues and health education and safety matters are regularly taught in many areas of the curriculum, especially in science, design and technology and physical education. Regular risk assessments are carried out. The school was recently awarded a railway safety certificate. The caretaker is a member of the governors' health and safety committee, and he ensures the building is very clean and well maintained.

· **Partnership with parents and the community**

52. The school has been very successful in building upon and strengthening its links with parents and the community since the last inspection.

53. Links with parents are good, and there are very good links with the community. Parents are well informed about the school and are provided with good clear information about the curriculum, school routines, and events. The headteacher and her staff make themselves available for discussion, informally, as a matter of course. The school provides regular newsletters and a prospectus, together with an attractively presented and well-written governors' annual report. In addition to annual written reports, which are satisfactory, monthly assessment sheets are supplied to parents of pupils in Key Stage 2, to inform them of progress. A large number of parents attended lessons during literacy hour, to see first hand how it was taught. These initiatives ensure good quality and relevant information is supplied to parents.

54. Teachers work hard to promote parents' involvement with the school, and with their children's education, and parents recognise this. They feel the headteacher and other members of staff are approachable. The school encourages parents to take an interest in its activities. Many parents support their children's learning at home by hearing them read regularly and by ensuring homework is completed on time. Some help with work in the classroom, as governors, or through the active Parent Teachers Association. The school recently reacted positively to parents' recent criticism of the homework system, to their general satisfaction.

55. The school has very good links with the community, including local businesses. The headteacher writes a regular article called 'notes from the school' for the village newsletter. Church links are strong, and provide support for pupils' spiritual development

through the twice-termly church services and the vicar's visits to school. The school makes full use of opportunities provided by the Kent Education Business Partnership to participate in suitable projects, such as the 'Bubbles' science project which was a cross-phase initiative, involving both secondary and primary schools.

56. Pupils are also involved in Dover Council's 'Waste Buster' initiative, recycling waste materials. Pupils contribute generously to a variety of charities. Visits are made to places of educational interest, and good use is made of the expertise of visitors to the school to extend pupils' learning. Arrangements for pupils' transfer to secondary education and relationships with other schools are good. These strong, well-planned links add significant enrichment to pupils' work and their progress.

The management and efficiency of the school

· Leadership and management

57. The headteacher is an exceptionally strong and effective leader. She sets a clear direction for the work of the school, which is based on a clear vision for the school's future development, and on a good understanding of the needs of all its pupils. Together with the governing body, the headteacher manages the school very well. Since her appointment in 1997, the headteacher has implemented many initiatives, with a clear focus on raising attainment. Many of these initiatives such as the improved arrangements for planning and assessment have not been in place long enough to have a significant impact on attainment. Nevertheless, the school has made satisfactory progress since the last inspection, with issues identified at that time being successfully addressed. Schemes of work and policies have been introduced for all subjects and all pupils now have equal access to the curriculum. Teachers plan work which is carefully matched to the needs of individual pupils and good use is made of assessment information to help plan work. Standards of attainment and progress have been raised in art and design and technology. At the end of Key Stage 2, attainment in English, mathematics and science remains broadly similar to that found in the last inspection. Although attainment in Key Stage 1 is lower in writing and mathematics than previously, this is due to changes in the intake of pupils rather than any deterioration in the quality of education provided by the school. Indeed, the quality of teaching has improved significantly since the last inspection.

58. Members of staff and the governing body have established clear priorities for improvement and all members of staff are working to achieve the school's stated aims. The quality of the school development plan is very good. It sets clear and realistic targets for improvement and contains very good detail about funding, identifying clear links with the available budget. It clearly identifies how achievements are to be measured and evaluated and forms a very good basis for school improvement.

59. The implementation of the 'literacy hour' is being well managed and the school is monitoring the effectiveness of literacy teaching. Members of staff have been given suitable training and are familiar with the expectations of the literacy framework. Funds allocated for the purchase of literacy resources have been used appropriately.

60. Arrangements for the monitoring of teaching and curriculum development are excellent. The headteacher has a very good working knowledge of the school and monitors the quality of teaching and learning through classroom observation and by looking at pupils' work and teachers' planning. She has a good overview of what is being

taught in different subjects and a good awareness of strengths and weaknesses in the school. Members of staff meet regularly to plan together and to review pupils' attainment and progress. This gives a good insight into areas for development. Monitoring of the curriculum is carefully structured throughout the school and subject co-ordinators look at pupils' work and teachers' planning in their curriculum areas. The school has introduced a sensible programme of 'release time' so that subject co-ordinators in English and mathematics can observe teachers at work in their classroom. This has been useful in raising the quality of teaching throughout the school. Training opportunities for members of staff are effectively linked to their professional needs and to the school development plan.

61. The involvement of the governing body in the management of the school has improved since the last inspection and they make a very good contribution to the work of the school. There is regular and productive communication between the headteacher and the chair of governors. The governing body is very supportive of the work of the school. They know the school well, have a good relationship with the headteacher and share her vision for the future of the school. They have a good understanding of their various responsibilities and work hard to share the management with the headteacher. Several working committees meet regularly and perform valuable roles that include monitoring finances and identifying areas for development on the school site. They are appropriately involved in implementing and reviewing the school development plan. Individual governors oversee different curriculum areas. They regularly visit school to observe work in their curriculum area, giving detailed feedback to the rest of the governing body. This is effective in helping the whole governing body develop an understanding of what is being taught to the pupils. Governors are fully involved in target setting. The governors' annual report to parents is very well presented and gives a clear picture of the school's work. All statutory requirements are met in full.

62. Management of provision for pupils with special education needs is good. The school is fully complying with the Code of Practice for pupils with special educational needs. The designated special educational needs' governor shows a good interest and ensures that governors are kept well informed of developments.

63. The aims and values of the school are successfully reflected in its every day life and they make a strong contribution to high standards. There is a strong ethos that is reflected in all aspects of the school's work and provides pupils with a very good sense of self-worth. All pupils are given equal access to the curriculum. There is a strong commitment to further improving standards of attainment and continuing to provide an effective learning environment. As a result, the school is in very strong position to raise attainment throughout the school.

· **Staffing, accommodation and learning resources**

64. The school has a high number of teachers for the number of pupils on roll. Teachers are suitably qualified to teach all the areas of learning for children under five and the subjects of the National Curriculum and work exceptionally well as a team. Good use is made of specialist teachers for art and special educational needs to support both staff and pupils.

65. The number of learning support staff is high for the size of school. They are very well trained and make a very good contribution to pupils' learning. They are actively involved in all aspects of school life. Members of staff have clear job descriptions that

identify their specific roles and are reviewed annually. In the last inspection, job descriptions were described as 'too general'. This is no longer the case.

66. Arrangements for the professional development of staff and the induction of new members of staff are very good. Newly qualified teachers are given excellent support throughout their first year of teaching. They are given a thorough introduction to the day-to-day life of the school. Appraisal is carried out effectively and makes a positive contribution to teachers' professional development. However, the governing body has not implemented arrangements for the appraisal of the headteacher. Members of staff have good opportunities to strengthen their skills and are encouraged to attend appropriate in-service training courses. These have had a good impact on the quality of education provided by the school, for example by increasing teachers' knowledge and understanding of the expectations of the 'literacy hour'.

67. A very conscientious and hard-working caretaker ensures that the building and site are cleaned to a very high standard. The lunchtime supervisors are fully involved in school life and help to make lunchtimes peaceful, calm and civilised. They have been given appropriate training to help their professional development.

68. Overall, the accommodation at the school is good. The school is spacious for the number of pupils, although some classrooms are cramped during literacy and numeracy lessons due to the large number of pupils in some groups. Displays of good quality make the classrooms, corridors and entrance hall very attractive. The school is well maintained and good use is made of available space, with shared areas used effectively for group work and individual information technology activities. There is an attractive and well-stocked library, as well as book areas in all classrooms. These are used regularly by pupils for individual research.

69. Outdoor accommodation is excellent. There is a large grassed area and an attractive playground. This has been further enhanced by the addition of floor paintings, play equipment and curved wall. The school makes appropriate use of an attractive pond and wild life area in science lessons. Children under five have access to a fenced play area. Teachers' planning indicates that this used effectively to provide an appropriate outdoor curriculum.

70. Overall, resources are at least satisfactory in all subjects. Weaknesses identified in the last inspection have been addressed with resources for art now satisfactory. Resources for the teaching of religious education are good. There is a good range of books and other resources to support the 'literacy hour'. These include 'big books' and 'group readers' suitable for different age groups. Good use is made of local authority lending services to supplement resources in history. Throughout the school, resources are well organised and are made accessible to pupils during lessons. The school makes good use of visits to local places of interest to support pupils' learning.

71. Resources for children under five are satisfactory. There is a good range of small toys and construction kits.

• **The efficiency of the school**

72. The efficiency of the school is good. This is an improvement since the last inspection. The school plans how it is to spend money more carefully and governors are more fully involved in monitoring spending.

73. The school's budget is well prepared and based on the educational priorities identified in the school development plan. This shows clear links between the priorities for development and the school's budget. It indicates responsibilities, costs and time-scales required to implement targets.

74. The headteacher and governing body meet regularly to monitor spending. They have a very good understanding of the parts they play in financial management and work together to plan spending on the curriculum, staff training and resources. The governing body has identified the need for more careful evaluation of the cost-effectiveness of its spending. Nevertheless, budgetary decisions are made after careful consideration of the possible impact of spending on pupils' standards of attainment. For example, the recent decision to employ extra learning support staff to help pupils improve their literacy skills was based on a clear understanding of where there were weaknesses in attainment. Accumulated funds are used appropriately to maintain staffing levels. This spending has been carefully planned. There are appropriate plans to cope with the varying number of pupils on roll in each year.

75. Teachers are deployed effectively and very good use is made of learning support assistants and adult volunteers. Good use is made of accommodation, with available space being used effectively. Learning resources are used appropriately and make a good contribution to learning. Extra funding provided for the implementation of the 'National Literacy Strategy' has been used to purchase appropriate extra resources and to enable members of staff to receive suitable training.

76. Funds raised by parents and members of staff through a range of events are used successfully to improve the facilities and resources in the school, for example for the purchase of computers and outdoor play equipment. Additional income from other sources is used appropriately. For example, a recent contribution from a local garden-centre paid for garden equipment.

77. The day-to-day control of finances is good. The school secretary is very hard working and ensures that daily routines are well managed. She gives good support to the headteacher. There has been no recent audit by the local authority.

78. Funds allocated for staff training are used very effectively to support targets identified in the school development plan and for professional development. Funding for pupils with special educational needs is used effectively to provide support for these pupils in some lessons. This makes a positive contribution to improving pupils' attainment.

79. Pupils enter the school with below average levels of attainment. The school has a good ethos and quality of teaching is good overall. Overall, pupils make good progress and they develop positive attitudes to work. The cost per pupil is above average because of the small size of the school but spending is carefully targeted by the headteacher and governing body and is used efficiently. Taking all of these factors into account, the school provides good value for money.

· **PART B: CURRICULUM AREAS AND SUBJECTS**

· **Areas of learning for children under five**

80. The attainment of children on entry to school is below average. Scores in the tests used when they first start school confirm this. By the age of five, children's attainment is in line with the nationally recognised 'desirable outcomes of learning' for their age in personal and social development, knowledge and understanding of the world and creative development. Children make good progress in these areas of learning. In language and literacy, mathematics and physical development, children make satisfactory progress but, by the age of five, attainment remains below the expectations for their age. Children with special educational needs are well supported and make good progress.

81. At the time of the last inspection, the attainment of children when they started school was above average and standards, by the age of five, were found to be good in knowledge and understanding of the world, language and literacy and physical development. The school has identified the intake at that time as being exceptional. Since then, there has been a change in the characteristics of the school with more lower attaining children being admitted. Children continue to make good progress in the reception class.

82. Many children have poor personal and social skills when they start school. Most children behave well, although a few get over excited and find it difficult to listen to the teacher in whole class sessions. Children are enthusiastic about their schoolwork and try hard in all activities. Children learn to co-operate with each other and play sensibly when, for example given opportunities to use small construction kits. They show respect for property, as well as care and concern for each other and develop a sound understanding of the difference between right and wrong. Children have good relationships with adults in the class but find it hard to work independently when required to do so by a particular task.

83. In language and literacy, children enjoy books and handle them with care. They show an interest in stories and can link different parts of a story with the pages of a particular book. Higher attaining children accurately retell a simple story. Most children show an awareness of the way in which words or symbols can be sequenced in writing. The highest attaining children are beginning to read simple texts and recognise and write a few simple words. Most children recognise and some can copy-write their names. Children speak confidently to each other and adults, but many have poorly developed listening skills.

84. In mathematics, many children have a limited understanding of number, with few able to write numbers or count accurately beyond ten. They sing number rhymes and some higher attaining children recognise and order numbers to twenty. Children enjoy number games and use appropriate mathematical language such as 'biggest' and 'smallest'.

85. In knowledge and understanding of the world, children enjoy finding out about the world around them. They are able to talk about past and present events in their lives and have sound knowledge of where they live. They know what animals and plants need to live and when looking at a fish can describe the function of its different body parts. For example, they explain that the 'gill' is used for breathing. They use construction kits with confidence to build different objects and enjoy making simple models using 'recycled

materials' using appropriate cutting, joining and folding skills. Children confidently use the computer to draw pictures, play mathematical games and write letters to 'Percy the puppet'.

86. In physical development, children dress themselves quietly and sensibly and have a good awareness of space when dancing or playing. The children handle scissors, glue brushes and pencils sensibly in art and design and technology activities and use them successfully to make simple models or good quality paintings.

87. In creative development, children draw and paint confidently and show good control of a range of tools. They make interesting models using paper and card and draw pictures to illustrate their work. During the inspection, children made good quality paintings of fish. Children enjoy music lessons and join in with enthusiasm when singing in the classroom or in assembly.

88. The teaching of children under five is satisfactory overall, with good teaching in personal and social education, knowledge and understanding of the world and creative development. This is similar to the findings of the last inspection. The teacher is calm, caring and patient and is given very good support from learning support assistants. Together they are successful in helping the children to become happy and confident at school. Children's behaviour is well managed with good use made of a puppet to hold children's attention. The teacher has high expectations of behaviour and successfully achieves these standards from the children. A very high emphasis is placed on developing children's personal and social skills. Lesson planning is good and includes a variety of activities to provide different experiences. Children of differing prior attainment are encouraged to work at an appropriate level. Teachers' discussions with the children are effective and good use is made of questions to extend learning. However, children are given few opportunities to choose activities for themselves. Members of staff know the children well and provide them with good support.

89. The curriculum provided for children under five is satisfactory and provides a sound foundation for children entering the statutory years of education. Work is carefully planned around the nationally recognised 'desirable outcomes of learning for children under five'. Children are provided with a broad and balanced curriculum which is appropriate for their age and ability.

90. Assessment of children's attainment and progress is very good. Appropriate use is made of an assessment when children start school to identify their needs. Teachers keep suitable records of children's progress and use these to help plan future work. Appropriate records of children's progress are kept. These are used effectively to identify future areas of learning. A strong feature of assessment arrangements is the contribution made by learning support assistants. They are fully involved in assessing children's work; for example by making notes on individual children during literacy and numeracy lessons.

91. There is good liaison between the school and home for children under five. Parents are welcomed into school at any time to discuss concerns, and new children spend time in the class before they are due to start. These activities help them to settle into school quickly. Particularly helpful is the 'pre-school' book for parents which gives good information about how to help their child when he/she starts school. For homework, children are encouraged to share books with their parents. This helps to maintain the home-school link that has been established before they start school.

92. Resources for children under five are satisfactory. Indoor resources are readily accessible and are of sound quality. There is a good range of small toys, as well as suitable resources such as construction kits for developing co-ordination skills. Good opportunities are provided for the children to use the local environment to extend their knowledge and understanding of the world.

93. The classroom is well organised. Attractive displays make it a stimulating environment. Children have access to a fenced outdoor play area, which is used effectively to promote physical development.

English, mathematics and science

English

94. Pupils enter school with below average levels of attainment in English. Overall, pupils' attainment by the end of both key stages is in line with national averages, with attainment in reading better than in writing. Pupils' speaking and listening skills are good. There is a considerable variation in attainment from year to year according to the number of pupils identified as having special educational needs in each year group.

95. In the 1999 National Curriculum end of Key Stage 1 tests, pupils' attainment was high in reading when compared to all schools and similar school. In writing, pupils' attainment was well above average when compared to all schools, and well below average when compared to similar schools. In Year 2, in 1999, there were a greater number of higher attaining pupils than usual taking the end of key stage tests. In the 1999 National Curriculum end of Key Stage 2 tests, pupils' attainment in English was average when compared to all schools and similar schools.

96. An analysis of test results for the last three years indicate that over that time boys achieve lower standards than girls in English at both key stages. Test results for 1999 indicate that this trend has been reversed in reading. The school has successfully focused on raising boys' attainment in reading by reviewing the range of reading materials available in school, by making greater use of information technology to stimulate boys interest and through the increased focus on teaching specific reading skills in the 'literacy hour'. However, boys' attainment remains lower than girls in writing and the school has already identified the need to address this issue as a priority.

97. Since the last inspection, standards have improved in speaking and listening. They remain broadly similar in reading in both key stages and in writing in Key Stage 2. Standards in writing are lower in writing at Key Stage 1, where, in the current Year 2, there is a greater percentage of pupils identified as having special educational needs. The progress pupils make has improved since the last inspection, particularly in Key Stage 2, where the progress of pupils in Years 3, 4 and 5 was described as 'sporadic'. The quality of teaching has improved significantly, as has the quality of teachers' planning and procedures for assessing work. There is no evidence of underachievement in reading at Key Stage 2, as was found in the last inspection.

98. Most pupils with special educational needs are achieving at a level appropriate to their prior attainment, and they make good progress in all aspects of the English curriculum. Many pupils who have below average attainment when they start school achieve satisfactory standards by the end of both key stages.

99. Standards of speaking and listening are good throughout the school and pupils make good progress. As they get older, they become more confident about speaking aloud and presenting their views to an audience. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils speak confidently in different situations. Year 1 pupils accurately describe things that have happened in their lives. Year 2 pupils participate well in group discussions. They listen carefully to the views of the teachers. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils speak confidently in a range of situations. For example, they talk confidently in class assemblies and explain their reasoning clearly in English lessons. When invited to read their work out, many older pupils project their voices well. Higher attaining pupils are able to present arguments clearly. Pupils listen carefully to the views of others and respond sensitively to each other's spoken contributions.

100. Standards of reading are satisfactory at both key stages and pupils make good progress. They read increasingly difficult texts as they get older, developing increased concentration and levels of understanding. By the end of Key Stage 1, most pupils know the relationship between groups of letters and the sounds they make. They enjoy reading books and most can do so independently during quiet reading sessions. They read with greater fluency and can talk about characters and events in the books they read. By the end of Key Stage 2, all pupils have a positive attitude to reading and most read longer texts silently and with good concentration. Most pupils know how to find information from non-fiction books by using the index, scanning and skimming the text and making notes about what they have read. Higher attaining pupils read challenging texts with fluency, accuracy, expression and confidence. Throughout the school, pupils who have been identified as having special educational needs are enthusiastic about reading and read appropriate texts confidently. Their level of understanding is often limited to recalling what has happened in the story.

101. In writing at Key Stage 1, although pupils make satisfactory progress, standards are below average. In Key Stage 2, pupils make good progress and achieve satisfactory standards. Progress is slower at Key Stage 1 because the large group sizes for literacy lessons means it is difficult to meet the needs of all of the pupils all of the time. As they get older, pupils' use of punctuation improves and they begin to write longer and more interesting pieces of work. Boys' writing skills are less well developed than girls, particularly in Key Stage 1 and Years 3 and 4. This trend of lower attainment is maintained throughout the school, although the gap lessens in Years 5 and 6. By the end of Key Stage 1, most pupils write for a variety of purposes, including factual accounts, poems and stories. They use spelling aids such as dictionaries and word lists to help them spell unfamiliar words. Higher attaining pupils accurately use simple punctuation in their writing. However, pupils lack confidence when writing and use a limited range of vocabulary in their written work. This pattern is continued in Key Stage 2, with many pupils unadventurous in their choice of vocabulary. Whilst most pupils have a vivid imagination and use words expressively when talking, this is not reflected in much of their written work. Pupils write for a wide range of purposes and accurately use paragraphs and more complex punctuation such as speech marks and apostrophes. Pupils with special educational needs produce short pieces of written work, using a limited vocabulary and simple punctuation.

102. By the end of Key Stage 2, many pupils are writing neatly using a joined cursive style. However, boys' handwriting is less well developed than girls. This is most noticeable in Key Stage 1, where many boys have poor hand control and do not form their letters correctly or write neatly.

103. Pupils work hard in English lessons and concentrate well. Little time is wasted in classes and most pupils show good concentration and perseverance when faced with difficult tasks. Pupils are enthusiastic about books and enjoy sharing their work with each other. In most lessons, they work well co-operatively and try hard to improve their work in the light of the teacher's comments.

104. The quality of teaching is satisfactory in Key Stage 1 and good in Key Stage 2. All teachers plan carefully and produce detailed plans showing what pupils of different attainment levels are expected to learn from a particular activity. Teachers provide work which builds on pupils' previous experiences and in Key Stage 2 in particular have high expectations of what pupils should achieve. Lessons are well paced and resources well prepared. Teachers' questioning is of very high quality. Teachers use language carefully in order to encourage pupils to think for themselves and challenge them to extend their learning. There is a good balance in all lessons between teacher-led and independent work. Pupils are grouped according to their prior attainment in both key stages. In Key Stage 2 this is very effective, with the grouping enabling teachers to plan work which closely matches individual needs. In Key Stage 1, groups are too large for the age of the children and as a result there is a wider range of abilities. This makes it more difficult for teachers to meet the needs of all pupils and consequently progress over time is slower than in Key Stage 1 than it is in Key Stage 2, particularly in developing writing skills. Higher attaining pupils in Years 5 and 6 also benefit from extra support they are given in a withdrawal group. Good quality teaching, which is focused on improving pupils' writing, makes a good contribution to raising the attainment of these pupils.

105. Support for pupils with special educational need focuses particularly on the development of language skills and their individual education plans identify the language skills that are to be developed. The very well trained learning support assistants help these targets to be achieved.

106. Arrangements for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are very good. Throughout the school, the quality of teachers' marking is very good. Work is marked after each lesson, and teachers add written comments which identify what pupils need to do to improve their work. Discussions with pupils indicate that they clearly understand the purpose of the teachers' written comments and they work to achieve the targets that have been set. Marking pupils' work forms the basis of all teacher assessment and is effective in helping teachers keep track of the progress of individual pupils from lesson-to lesson. Parents receive useful information about the attainment and progress of their children in annual reports and through regular parent-teacher consultations. Parents of pupils in Key Stage 2 are also sent useful monthly assessment records, which give a clear picture of progress. Very good use is made of various forms of different testing to measure pupils' progress over time. The school makes good use of assessment information to set both short and long-term targets for pupils.

107. All aspects of literacy are given equal emphasis in the curriculum and pupils are effectively encouraged to develop literacy skills when learning about other subjects. Speaking and listening skills are successfully developed through class discussions in various subjects. Pupils use their reading skills to good effect in many curriculum areas and are encouraged by teachers to set their own research projects in subjects such as history and geography. Writing skills are used across the curriculum to record the pupils' thoughts and findings.

108. Information technology is used effectively to support the development of reading and writing skills. Pupils produce drafts of written work on the computer and use CD-ROMS to use basic research skills. Teachers of younger pupils use taped stories to help develop listening skills.

109. The curriculum provided for pupils is broad and balanced, with teachers actively teaching all aspects of the curriculum. The time allocated for the subject in Key stage 2 is higher than average and this has a good impact on pupils' progress. However, throughout the school, in literacy lessons, too little time is allocated to the teaching of specific writing skills. At present, more time is given to 'shared reading' and 'group reading' than is given to 'shared writing' and 'group writing'. Good quality teachers' planning is carefully linked to the expectations of the 'National Literacy Strategy'. There is a clear and useful subject policy. The school has identified the need to review how handwriting is taught in Key Stage 1, in order to improve the writing skills of boys.

110. There is an attractive and well-stocked library, which is used effectively by pupils and teachers. All classrooms have attractive book areas with a good selection of books.

Mathematics

111. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' attainment is below the national average. This is similar to the findings of the last inspection. A third of the pupils in the current Year 2 group is on the school's register for special educational needs and some of these pupils are not expected to achieve Level 2. In the 1999 end of key stage assessments for Key Stage 1, pupils' attainment was above average compared with all schools and with similar schools. In Year 2 in 1999, there was a greater number of higher attaining pupils than usual taking the end of key stage tests.

112. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' attainment is in line with the national average. Pupils' standards of attainment remain similar to those found in the last inspection. In the 1999 National Curriculum assessments attainment was above average when compared with all schools and with similar schools. This year group had a lower number of pupils identified as having special educational needs than in previous years. An analysis of test results for the last three years in both key stages indicates that pupils' attainment varies considerably from year to year according to the number of pupils identified as having special educational needs in a particular year. There is no significant difference in the attainment of boys or girls.

113. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils count in twos and fives and add and subtract, using numbers up to at least twenty. They divide shapes into halves and quarters and tell the time to the nearest quarter. They use simple graphs to show information that has been collected. Higher attaining pupils recognise sums of money in pounds and pence and have a better understanding of place value. Lower attaining pupils are still learning number bonds to ten and many do not write numerals correctly or understand the importance of measuring accurately.

114. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils round numbers to the nearest 100 and can describe and use different strategies for doubling numbers. When working with sums of money they add and divide to two decimal places and understand how to find the lowest common denominator when working with fractions. Pupils know the properties of triangles and measure angles accurately. They know the names and uses of various types of graph. Higher attaining pupils are quicker when working out sums mentally and calculate

the angles and areas of more complex shapes. Lower attaining pupils have a weak recall of the multiplication tables and do not easily recognise patterns in numbers. They work with smaller numbers and have a limited understanding of the properties of different shapes. For example, when calculating the area of a circle they count squares in a grid instead of using a formula.

115. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress, with many achieving national expectations by the end of each key stage. Most years, girls perform better than boys do, although during the inspection there was no evidence of boys being disadvantaged with boys and girls being equally keen to answer questions during mental mathematics sessions.

116. Pupils make satisfactory progress at Key Stage 1 and good progress at Key Stage 2. Progress has improved at Key Stage 2 since the last inspection. A high allocation of time to the subject for older Key Stage 2 pupils enables them to make good progress in the subject. Progress is slower in Key Stage 1 because the large group sizes for numeracy lessons means it is difficult for teachers to meet the needs of all of the pupils all of the time. Throughout the school, teachers are aware of the needs of lower attaining pupils and give them work to meet their needs. In addition, learning support assistants provide very effective support and as a result, pupils with special educational needs make good progress in developing mathematical skills and understanding.

117. Pupils work well in most lessons although some Key Stage 1 pupils fidget when sitting and listening to the teachers and are noisy when not closely supervised. At Key Stage 2, pupils are interested in lessons and are well behaved and attentive. Older Key Stage 2 pupils present their work very neatly. Throughout the school, pupils handle resources carefully and help to tidy away at the ends of the lessons.

118. The quality of teaching remains satisfactory throughout the school with two examples of good teaching observed. In the good lessons teachers clearly showed the purpose of the work and its relevance to everyday life. For example, in one lesson at Key Stage 1, the teacher showed pupils how a knowledge of the two and five times tables can help when giving change using two pence or five pence coins.

119. Pupils are grouped according to prior attainment. This is effective at Key Stage 2 in helping teachers to match work more closely to pupils' needs. It is less effective at Key Stage 1, where the teaching groups are large and many pupils are unable to work independently. Small withdrawal groups for higher attaining pupils at Key Stage 2 are not effective for Years 3 and 4 because the pupils in this group come from two different classes and are not always studying the same topic in their own classes. This makes it difficult for the teacher to plan work to match the topics being studied in both classes.

120. All lessons are well planned and teachers provide work appropriate to pupils' prior attainment. At the time of the last inspection, work was not always challenging for higher attaining pupils. This is no longer the case. Throughout the school, teachers have a sound knowledge of the expectations of the national numeracy strategy. They give clear instructions and explanations of strategies used and include mathematical vocabulary in their discussions such as 'axes', 'variable' and 'ratio'. They expect pupils to explain the methods they are using. Teachers make effective use of praise, ask suitable questions to ensure that pupils understand and make good use of a review session at the end of lessons to share and reinforce what has been learnt. Teachers give pupils suitable opportunities to make predictions and solve problems. Throughout the school, there is a

good pace to most lessons, with pupils encouraged to work quickly. Homework makes a sound contribution to pupils' mathematical learning. Teachers regularly send home number work that reinforces and develops learning from school. Information technology is often included in lessons. For example, younger pupils at Key Stage 1 compared longer and shorter objects on the computer screen.

121. Numeracy skills are given suitable priority and good opportunities are provided for these to be further developed when carrying out work in other subjects. For example, older pupils measure accurately in design and technology and use graphs in science lessons.

122. The school provides a broad and balanced mathematics curriculum. There is an appropriate written policy but this has not been up dated in the light of the most recent curriculum changes. Teachers make effective use of the National Numeracy framework and several commercial schemes of work to ensure that pupils' learning builds on their previous knowledge. There is a clear action plan for the further development of the subject.

123. Provision for assessing pupils' attainment and progress is very good. Pupils' work is regularly marked and teachers clearly identify how a pupil can improve his/her work. A range of standardised tests provides very good information on pupils' attainment and progress over time. This information is used effectively by teachers to set future targets for learning and to identify what needs to be taught next. This is an improvement from the time of the last inspection when assessments used were not linked to the work pupils were doing.

Science

124. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' attainment is in line with the national average. An analysis of end of key stage teacher assessments shows that attainment in science has remained broadly the same since the last inspection. In the 1999 end of key stage assessments for Key Stage 1, pupils' attainment was average compared with all schools and similar schools. However, no pupils achieved the higher Level 3.

125. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' attainment is in line with the national average. National Curriculum test results for 1999 were average in relation to all schools and below average when compared with similar schools. A low allocation of time for the subject means that a lower than average number of pupils achieve the higher Level 5. There is no significant difference in the attainment of boys and girls at the end of either key stage.

126. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils make simple predictions of what might happen when water is added to dried foods. They know that there are different types of food and that exercise is important for a healthy lifestyle. Pupils know plants and animals are living things and what they need to sustain life. They describe and compare various materials and understand that some materials can be changed when heated or frozen. Lower attaining pupils complete similar work but use simpler methods for recording their answers. Higher attaining pupils make more careful observations.

127. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils know that there are different sources of light and that it travels in straight lines. They know that materials can be transparent, translucent or opaque. They understand the need for 'fair testing'. Higher attaining pupils include more detail in their descriptions of different organs in the human body. Lower

attaining pupils use resources to help them record their answers. For example, when labelling the human eye they were able to choose from a selection of pre-printed labels.

128. The progress pupils make is good at Key Stage 1, particularly in life and living processes, and satisfactory at Key Stage 2. Progress has improved at Key Stage 1 since the last inspection. The relatively low amount of time allocated to older Key Stage 2 pupils enables them to make only satisfactory progress. Nevertheless, as pupils get older they increase their factual knowledge and become better at making observations during investigations.

129. Pupils with special educational needs continue to make at least sound progress and achieve levels appropriate to their prior attainment. Most years, girls achieve higher results than boys do, although during the inspection there was no evidence of boys being disadvantaged and both boys and girls were keen to carry out investigations.

130. Pupils work well in science lessons. They are keen to answer questions and listen intently to the teachers and each other. They carry out investigations sensibly and share resources with each other.

131. Literacy and numeracy skills are used effectively by pupils in science lessons. Key Stage 1 pupils use reference books to find out about different creatures and types of food and Key Stage 2 pupils time experiments and measure liquids in millilitres. When carrying out an experiment to find out the amount of air in a chocolate bar the pupils calculated their own percentages.

132. The quality of teaching is good at Key Stage 1 and satisfactory at Key Stage 2 with an example of good teaching. Lesson planning gives clear detail of the activities to be covered in the lesson, and in the good lessons identifies what pupils of differing prior attainment are expected to learn from a particular piece of work. Teachers provide work that suitably challenges higher attaining pupils. Teachers have a good knowledge and understanding of the subject and make effective use of subject vocabulary such as 'senses', 'nerves' and 'refraction'. Time is used effectively and resources are well prepared. Teachers have good relationships with the pupils and manage them well. Questioning is used effectively to encourage pupils to think deeply. For example, younger pupils at Key Stage 1 were asked what might happen if they ate only unhealthy foods. In most lessons there is a good mix of teacher led, group and individual activities.

133. Throughout the school, information technology is used effectively to support work in science. For example, older pupils use the CD-ROM to find out more about the science topics they are studying.

134. The science curriculum is broad and balanced but insufficient time is allocated to the subject to enable pupils to achieve higher levels. A curriculum framework shows what is to be taught each year and supports teachers' in their planning. Teachers are beginning to make use of a nationally recommended scheme of work to help them with planning work. Effective use is made of links with industry to provide pupils with interesting opportunities to carry out investigations and gain experiences that cannot be provided in school. For example, a local company provides the resources for pupils to carry out thirty different experiments during a special science 'jamboree'.

135. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment in science are very good. Effective use is made of testing to assess pupils' understanding of what they have learnt. Teachers

record pupils' test results and use this information to help plan work. Pupils' work is regularly marked and teachers give good verbal feedback. Teachers make valuable evaluations of lessons and use this and the detailed written comments on pupils' work to decide what needs to be taught next. A structured checklist for investigative science helps teachers know what skills are expected of each year group.

Other subjects or courses

Art

136. The standards of work achieved by the oldest pupils in the school are good for their age. This is a considerable improvement since the time of the last inspection when pupils' attainment was below national expectations. Parents are pleased with the improvements made in art. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils make expressive masks in styles used by Greek actors and model good quality coil pots in the shape of amphorae. They show interesting textures and patterns when making monochrome pictures in the style of Escher and blend watercolours to good effect. In Key Stage 1, pupils use clay tools effectively to make patterns on their clay pots and cut paper to make bright pictures in the style of Matisse. The youngest pupils mix their own colours when using paint and are confident about experimenting with the marks they make.

137. The progress of all pupils is now good. They are given plenty of opportunities to evaluate their own work and to express themselves freely. They increase their skills in handling various media and improve their ability to observe carefully and interpret their ideas into pictures.

138. Pupils show a positive attitude to their work and no longer show a lack of interest in the subject. They concentrate well and share equipment sensibly. Older pupils show patience when improving their work in the light of constructive criticism. Younger pupils enjoy the experience of working with clay and paint and co-operate with each other well.

139. The quality of teaching is good throughout the school. At the time of the last inspection the quality of teaching was variable and lesson planning was insufficient. This is no longer the case. Teachers write clear lesson plans and have a good knowledge of the subject. They give effective guidance to pupils in the use of different materials. They have good relationships with the pupils and manage them well. Teachers assess work during lessons and this encourages pupils to improve their work.

140. There is a useful written policy on the teaching of art. This includes a skills checklist to help teachers when planning work. Effective use has been made of training days to improve teachers' knowledge of the subject. Pupils are given good opportunities to learn about other cultures when studying the work of artists around the world. For example, older pupils made a careful study of Japanese art before painting their own, well-observed seascapes.

141. Useful assessments of individuals and groups of pupils are made on teachers' lesson plans and these are used when planning future work.

142. Pupils who attend the after school art club achieve very high standards. They paint animals and fruit accurately and carefully observe colour and shading when making pastel pictures of bottles.

Design and technology

143. The standards of work achieved by the oldest pupils in the school are good for their age. This is an improvement since the last inspection when attainment was below expectations. They make careful designs to solve specific problems, clearly showing the planned size of the model and the materials needed. They show a range of skills in joining wood and use electric circuits or wind-up mechanisms to power their models. They evaluate their own and other pupils' work, making constructive comments on how it can be improved. Lower attaining pupils often make simpler, one word evaluations. At Key Stage 1, pupils join material and card to make simple books with secret flaps. They discuss with the teachers what aspects of the work are difficult. They evaluate the effectiveness of commercial packaging and make their own attractive packaging. They make decorative and functional, teddy bear puppets by joining together fabric and various other materials.

144. Pupils make good progress throughout the school; they develop an increasing range of making skills and apply these techniques to more demanding tasks. The detail of their planning improves, and they are beginning to look more critically at their finished product in order to decide how it could be improved.

145. All pupils are well motivated, listen carefully to the teachers and settle quickly to their work. They handle resources sensibly and help to tidy up at the end of the lessons. Older pupils co-operate well when following their own recipes in food technology.

146. The quality of teaching is good. This is a considerable improvement from the time of the last inspection when teachers' knowledge of the subject was found to be weak and activities planned took insufficient account of health and safety issues or the needs of the pupils. Teachers now have a good knowledge of the subject and write satisfactory lesson plans clearly showing what pupils are expected to achieve. They now give clear guidance on health and safety issues and make effective use of other pupils' work to encourage high standards. Parents are particularly pleased with the way teachers now monitor the safe use of tools.

147. There is a satisfactory written policy and the school is making effective use of a nationally recommended scheme of work to help with planning. This is an improvement from the time of the last inspection when there was no scheme of work to support teachers in their planning. Pupils are given good opportunities to use their literacy and numeracy skills. For example, older pupils list rules for hygiene, write their own recipes and measure out the ingredients. Effective use is made of training to ensure that all teachers follow the same format of encouraging pupils to plan, make and review their work.

148. Assessment arrangements are very good and all teachers make valuable comments on lesson plans to show what individuals or groups of pupils need to learn next.

149. The school successfully takes part in various competitions and ran a competition for groups of older pupils during a French exchange visit. This made an effective contribution to pupils' cultural and social development when they shared ideas with pupils from a school in France and designed and built models of the Eiffel Tower. There is a close partnership with local senior schools, which enables expertise to be shared.

Geography

150. During the time of the inspection no lessons in geography were timetabled. Judgements on attainment and progress have been made by scrutinising pupils' work and teachers' plans and by talking to teachers and pupils.

151. The standards of work achieved by the oldest pupils in the school are satisfactory for their ages. Standards remain similar to those found at the time of the last inspection. They have a sound knowledge of their local environment and of other countries. They can locate the Amazonian rainforests on a map and understand why 'deforestation' is an important global issue. Pupils in Year 6 can describe their locality and how it differs from the location of their residential visit. They map different uses of land in the village. Younger pupils use a map of the local village to find different features and can draw a map to show their route to school.

152. Overall, pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress at both key stages. They show an increasing ability to express their ideas clearly, drawing upon geographical knowledge and understanding. Over both key stages, pupils show a developing confidence in using appropriate geographical vocabulary.

153. Pupils enjoy talking about work they have undertaken in geography lessons. They show a strong sense of curiosity about the localities they have been studying.

154. There is insufficient evidence to form a judgement on the quality of teaching as no lessons were timetabled during the week of inspection. A scrutiny of pupils' work and teachers' planning indicates that pupils are provided with appropriate opportunities to study their own and other localities. However, on occasions, where history and geography topics are linked, too much time is spent on the historical rather than the geographical aspects of the subject. For example, in a study of the local village most of the work pupils completed had an historical focus. Teachers have a sound subject knowledge and successfully encourage pupils to use their literacy skills in lessons by providing opportunities for discussion, debate and written work. They are given good opportunities to apply information technology skills to geographical tasks with pupils using the computer to record findings in written and graphical form. Teachers regularly mark pupils' work and evaluate their attainment and progress by writing informative comments on lesson planning

155. The school has recently revised its written subject policy and this gives helpful guidance to teachers. Teachers are beginning to use a nationally recommended scheme of work to help them with planning work. Their planning provides appropriate detail of what pupils of differing ages or abilities should be learning, but does not always distinguish sufficiently between historical and geographical aspects of the same topic.

156. Good use is made of the local area as a teaching resource. Visits to places further away in Key Stage 2 offer pupils good opportunities to undertake detailed fieldwork. These activities enhance pupils' learning.

History

157. As at the time of the last inspection, the standards of work achieved by the oldest in the school are satisfactory for their age. Older pupils understand that there are different sources of evidence and use this to seek answers to their own questions about periods of history. For example, pupils researched the origins of Aztec civilisation using second-hand sources of evidence such as books, maps and drawings. They can distinguish between fact and fiction in historical accounts and, in their writing, show a good empathy with

historical figures they have studied. By the end of Year 6, pupils are confident about selecting and organising information and use appropriate historical vocabulary. Pupils show a sound knowledge of the Romans and can describe features of their life and their impact on Britain. Younger pupils study the local village and can describe how the village has changed over time. They have a good understanding of what life was like in the past.

158. All pupils make satisfactory progress in both key stages. They successfully use their knowledge to make comparisons between their own lives and those of people from the past. For example, pupils from Year 3 could explain quite clearly why they would prefer to live in modern times rather than in the Roman era. Research skills are used to find information from various texts and older pupils use a wider range of evidence in their work.

159. Pupils talk with enthusiasm about their work in history and are keen to answer questions. They co-operate well with teachers and with each other, and handle historical resources carefully. However, the written work of some older pupils is poorly presented.

160. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. Teachers have a sound knowledge of the requirements of the National Curriculum and are very enthusiastic about the subject. Lesson planning gives suitable detail of what pupils are expected to learn. Good use is made of artefacts, and work is often planned around second-hand evidence such as photographs and books. Teachers provide pupils with good opportunities to use and develop their literacy skills in history lessons both through the use of discussion, research and written work. Good use is made of visitors from the local village who talk about life in the past. This helps pupils' to develop an understanding of the importance of 'oral history'.

161. Teachers keep their own records of pupils' work. Teachers' lesson planning is carefully annotated with written comments to show how well pupils are achieving.

162. The curriculum is broad, balanced and stimulating. There is an appropriate written policy on the teaching of history and the school uses a nationally recommended scheme of work to support teachers in their planning.

163. Good use is made of resources and visits to places of historical interest such as Deal castle and Dover museum. The school regularly borrows artefacts from the local authority lending service. These activities have a good impact on pupils' attainment in the subject and help to bring the subject alive.

Information Technology

164. There were few specific lessons in information technology time-tabled during the time of inspection. Judgements on pupils' attainment were made by looking at displays of pupils' completed work, observing small groups of pupils using computers, and talking to them about their achievements.

165. Pupils' attainment is in line with national expectations by the end of both key stages. By the end of Key Stage 1, many pupils are able to load and save work without adult help. They work independently and collaboratively to create text and use the computer to produce pictures using art programmes. Pupils use a programmable toy to help them understand how computers can be 'controlled'. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils use a wider range of programmes to produce newspapers, stories and poems. They use a good range of techniques when word processing, 'importing' pictures into their

writing and change the typeface to make it more attractive to the reader. They produce simple graphs and charts using data handling programmes. For example, pupils made graphs showing which was their classes favourite subject. Pupils research their own topics using CD-ROMs, although they have not yet learnt how to distinguish information that is useful from that which is not. Throughout the school, pupils have a sound understanding of the importance of information technology in their everyday lives. They are beginning to understand how the 'internet' can be used both to find information and to communicate over long distances.

166. At the time of the last inspection, the standards reached by pupils were judged to be good at Key Stage 1 and sound at Key Stage 2. Since the last inspection, the school has invested considerably in improving resources for information technology and has developed a good scheme of work. These have not yet been in place for long enough to have a significant impact on further raising pupils' attainment.

167. Pupils make satisfactory progress at both key stages. They become more confident as they get older and begin to work with increasing independence. Older pupils become fluent in their use of the keyboard and develop a wide range of practical skills. They use computers for a greater number of purposes and experience different applications of information technology. Pupils with special educational needs have equal access to the computers and make satisfactory progress.

168. Pupils respond well to work in information technology. They are enthusiastic and interested and are good at helping each other when a problem occurs. Many pupils have computers at home and develop good skills. They are keen to share these skills with each other at school.

169. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. Teachers have improved their confidence in teaching information technology and plan lessons where specific skills are to be taught. These are effective in enabling a large group of pupils to develop a skill that they are then able to practise individually or in small groups. Good use is made of information technology in other curriculum areas, for example to research topics in history or to draw graphs in mathematics. Learning support assistants are used effectively to work with pupils on the computer.

170. Documentation to support to teachers in planning for the subject is of good quality. There is a detailed subject policy and scheme of work, which give sufficient information to help teachers plan suitable work for pupils of differing ability.

171. Overall, resources are satisfactory. The school has a good number of computers, as well as a digital camera and 'control' box. Computers are suitably located so that pupils are encouraged to use them as part of their everyday work. The range of software is good and is sufficient to enable all the aspects of information technology to be experienced.

Music

172. As at the time of the last inspection, the standards of work achieved by the oldest pupils in the school are satisfactory for their age. Throughout the school, pupils sing sweetly and enthusiastically. Key Stage 2 pupils, keep a steady pulse and count the beats in a bar. They compare the styles of two pieces of music and follow simple music notation. Younger Key Stage 1 pupils choose appropriate untuned percussion instruments to accompany their performances and make up their own simple rhythm patterns.

173. All pupils continue to make satisfactory progress. They broaden their knowledge of musical terms and styles and improve their performance of songs.

174. Pupils enjoy music lessons and join in appropriately with all activities. They listen carefully to pre-recorded music and are keen to answer the teachers' questions.

175. The quality of teaching continues to be satisfactory throughout the school. Teachers have a satisfactory knowledge of the subject and are careful to use correct musical terms such as 'bar', 'rest' and 'beat'. Their lesson plans are clear and a suitable range of activities is included.

176. The written policy statement provides insufficient information on how pupils are to be assessed. However, a commercial scheme of work supports teachers in their lesson planning. The curriculum has a suitable mix of opportunities for pupils to appreciate music, compose, perform in public and learn musical terms and notation. There is a choir for pupils and a recorder club for pupils in Key Stage 2. Pupils have good opportunities to improve their literacy skills when reading the words of new songs. They develop their knowledge of other cultures through listening to and singing music from other countries. The low amount of time allocated to the subject limits pupils' rate of progress.

177. Useful assessments of individuals and groups of pupils are made on teachers' lesson plans and these are used when planning future work.

178. Pupils give regular performances to parents and the local community. These activities help to enrich the musical life of the school and give pupils opportunities of performing to an audience.

· **Physical Education**

179. The standards of work achieved by the oldest pupils in the school are satisfactory for their age. Standards remain similar to those found at the time of the last inspection. Most pupils learn to swim at least 25 metres, work in pairs to develop imaginative ways of balancing and play team games successfully. Key Stage 1 pupils achieve good standards in dance. They create their own interesting dance sequences using a wealth of ideas and types of movement.

180. Pupils make satisfactory progress in physical education. They increase their ability to sustain exercise and improve their body control and their use of games' equipment.

181. Pupils enjoy physical education and continue to respond well. They listen carefully to the teachers and follow instructions sensibly. They behave sensibly and enjoy the competitive aspect of lessons. Girls and boys co-operate with each other when playing games and concentrate well. Younger pupils enjoy watching each other's performances and offer helpful advice.

182. The quality of teaching is good. At the time of the last inspection some teaching was unsatisfactory due to a lack of expectations and unclear instructions. This is no longer the case. Teachers have a good awareness of health and safety requirements and ensure that pupils are given appropriate opportunities to warm up and cool down at the end of sessions. Lessons are carefully planned and well paced. Teachers manage pupils

well and make effective use of demonstrations to encourage pupils to improve their work.

183. The curriculum is broad and balanced and now includes suitable opportunities for Key Stage 2 pupils to learn to swim. There is a clear policy and schemes of work for all aspects of the subject. Pupils at Key Stage 2 have sound opportunities to use their numeracy skills. For example, in one lesson pupils were expected to make a quarter turn. The allocation of time to the subject is low at the end of Key Stage 2 and this effects rate of progress that is made.

184. Useful assessments of individuals and groups of pupils are made on teachers' lesson plans and these are used when planning future work.

185. There are after school clubs for netball and football and older pupils receive appropriate opportunities to play matches against other schools. Older pupils try outdoor and adventurous activities during a residential visit and have the opportunity to take part in an athletics club with an awards scheme. The school has good resources and facilities for the subject.

Religious Education

186. The attainment of pupils by the end of both key stages is below the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. At the time of the last inspection, pupils' attainment was satisfactory. Since then, the time allocated to the teaching of the subject has fallen, and it is not now sufficient to enable pupils to make satisfactory progress.

187. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils are aware of the beliefs and festivals of Christianity and they know various stories from the Bible. They think about things that are special in their life and explore the meaning of 'courage'. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils have a sound understanding of Christian beliefs and values and can accurately retell stories from the Bible. They think about the school community and describe how they could help people who were experiencing prejudice in the outside world. However, their knowledge and understanding of faiths other than Christianity is limited to the recall of a few basic facts and they cannot give a clear explanation of what it means to be, for example, a Christian, Muslim or Sikh.

188. Pupils make unsatisfactory progress at both key stages. Younger pupils acquire an understanding of right and wrong and the need for a moral code and they remember Bible stories they have been read. Older pupils increase their knowledge about Christianity but gain little insight into the beliefs of other religions.

189. Pupils respond well in lessons. They are attentive and make thoughtful comments. They show respect for the views of others and work well collaboratively.

190. The quality of teaching was satisfactory in the two lessons observed during the inspection. Lesson plans include clear detail of activities. However, they do not sufficiently distinguish between acts of collective Worship and religious education and these are sometimes included in the same lesson. Teachers have a satisfactory knowledge and understanding of the subject and effectively encourage pupils to talk about their own feelings. However, planned activities lack imagination, often consisting of the teacher telling a story which the pupils then write about. A scrutiny of teachers' planning indicates that the main focus of work is the teaching of religious facts rather giving pupils the opportunities to explore the meaning and significance of different faiths.

Arrangements for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are satisfactory. Teachers write useful comments on their lesson planning to show the achievements of individual pupils

191. The school has a good written subject policy and a detailed scheme of work based on the locally agreed syllabus. However, teachers do not follow this closely enough when planning work. Religious education is taught regularly, but too little time is allocated to the subject. This is a significant contributory factor to the low standards pupils achieve in the subject.

192. Resources for the subject are good. There is an appropriate selection of Bibles and a good selection of artefacts from different faiths. The school has established good links with the local Church of England and the vicar regularly visits school. Pupils take part in regular church services and older pupils visit Canterbury Cathedral each year for an 'activities day'. These activities successfully promote learning and stimulate the pupils' interest in the subject.

· **PART C: INSPECTION DATA**

· **Summary of inspection evidence**

1. The school was inspected for a total of ten days by three inspectors, one of whom was a lay inspector
 - .37 lessons or part lessons were observed, totaling 28 hours 35 minutes
 - .Discussions were held with the children, staff, governors and parents.
 - .A musical performance was observed
 - .A selection of children read to an inspector.
 - .Samples of children's work were inspected.
 - .Teachers' records and plans were scrutinised.
 - .A range of documentation and information supplied by the school was studied.
 - .Budgetary information was scrutinised.
 - .Attendance records and pupils' records were scrutinised.
 - .A pre-inspection meeting for parents was held, with ten parents attending.
 - .Questionnaires completed by parents were analysed.
 - .Lunchtimes were observed.

- **Data and indicators**

- **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	146	2	41	9

TEACHERS AND CLASSES

Qualified teachers (YR – Y6)

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent)	6.7
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	21.8

Education support staff (YR – Y6)

Total number of education support staff	6
Total aggregate hours worked each week	96.5

Average class size:	28
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- **FINANCIAL DATA**

Financial year:	87/98
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	£
Total income	270,659
Total expenditure	267,817
Expenditure per pupils	1728
Balance brought forward from previous year	18286
Balance carried forward to next year	21128

PARENTAL SURVEY

Number of questionnaires sent

110

Number of questionnaires

17

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	41	47	0	6	0
I would find it easy to approach the school with questions or problems to do	65	35	0	0	0
The school handles complaints from parents well	29	65	6	0	0
The school gives me a clear understanding of what is taught	18	65	11	6	0
The school keeps me well informed about my child(ren)'s progress	35	59	0	6	0
The school enables my child(ren) to achieve a good standard of work	59	41	0	0	0
The school encourages children to get involved in more than just their daily	65	35	0	0	0
I am satisfied with the work that my child(ren) is/are expected to do at home	18	47	11	18	6
The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on my child(ren)	59	35	6	0	0
The school achieves high standards of good behaviour	53	47	0	0	0
My child(ren) like(s) school	59	35	6	0	0