

INSPECTION REPORT

Chattenden Primary School

Rochester

LEA area: Medway

Unique Reference Number: 118324

Headteacher: Mr I Walton

Reporting inspector: Mr Paul Bamber RgI

Dates of inspection: 29th November to 2nd December 1999

Under OFSTED contract number: 707471

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

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Junior
Type of control:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Chattenden Lane Chattenden Rochester Kent ME3 8LQ
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body, Chattenden Primary School
Name of Chair of Governors:	Mr K Lower
Date of previous inspection:	June 1996

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Mrs S Thomas, Lay Inspector		Equality of opportunity; attitudes, behaviour and personal development; attendance; support, guidance and welfare; pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development
Mrs P Evans	Science, information technology, history, art.	partnership with parents and the community.
Miss D Latham.	English, geography, music, religious education.	Special educational needs; curriculum and assessment. Provision for children aged under five years; staffing, accommodation and learning resources.

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MAIN FINDINGS

What the school does well

- Teachers manage pupils well and, as a result, pupils have good attitudes to their lessons and are well behaved.
- The quality of relationships is good throughout the school.
- The teaching and support provided for the many pupils with special educational needs are good and contribute significantly to the good progress that they make.
- The school makes good provision for the pupils' personal development.
- Children aged under five years make good progress as a result of a well-planned curriculum and skilful teaching.
- The school has a positive partnership with parents and strong links with the community.
- The school's finances are well managed.

• Where the school has weaknesses

- I. There are weaknesses in the quality of the school's leadership and management.
- II. The school does not always challenge the most able pupils.
- III. The school lacks a coherent whole-school curriculum plan.

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

• How the school has improved since the last inspection

• Overall, the school has made satisfactory improvement since the last OFSTED inspection. Of the five key issues identified at that time, there has been improvement in four. The school now has a school development plan which details priorities for a year and outlines curricular development to 2002. However, insufficient improvement has been made in the amount of monitoring carried out by the headteacher. All subject requirements of the National Curriculum are now met and more pupils attain at the higher levels in national tests than previously. Changes to financial procedures now ensure that recommended practice is followed and that the quality of financial management is good. Some improvements have been made in whole-school planning as a result of new schemes of work and updated policies. There is, however, still no whole-school curricular plan. Other improvements include better resources, especially for English, mathematics and for children aged under five years. Standards have improved in information technology, religious education, design and technology and geography, but have deteriorated in mathematics and English. The quality of teaching and the quality and range of tasks set for homework have also improved. The school has satisfactory capacity to improve still further.

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</i>	<i>C</i>
English	E	D	<i>below average</i>	<i>D</i>
Mathematics	E	D	<i>well below average</i>	<i>E</i>
Science	C	C		

The information shows that standards in English and mathematics are well below that of all schools and below that of similar schools. In science, it shows that standards are average compared with all schools and similar schools. It should be noted that in the Year 6 cohort, which took the end of Key Stage 2 national tests in 1999, over 50 per cent of the pupils had significant special educational needs. Indeed, all the pupils who did not have special educational needs reached the nationally expected level for age. The findings of the inspection are that the proportion of the present Year 6 pupils attaining the nationally expected levels in English, mathematics and science is average. Standards are above average in art and average in all other subjects. The 1999 test data for Key Stage 1 show that standards in reading and writing are below average when compared with all schools and about average when compared with similar schools. In mathematics, average standards are shown when compared with all schools and above average standards compared with similar schools. In this Year 2 cohort, 58 per cent had significant special educational needs, which is likely to have affected standards negatively. In the present Year 2, a class which has 66 per cent of pupils with special educational needs, standards are below average in reading, writing and mathematics. They are above average in art and average in all other subjects. Children aged under five years attain average standards. At both Key Stages 1 and 2, pupils with special educational needs make good progress and attain good standards for their capabilities.

• **Quality of teaching**

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

During the inspection, 52 lessons were observed. Of these, three were very good, 21 good and 28 satisfactory. Strengths of the teaching include good behaviour management and relationships, well-planned lessons and the good use of resources. Weaknesses in teaching include some lack of confidence in applying new teaching methods and a lack of challenge for higher attaining pupils.

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 very attentive in lessons, behave sensibly in and around the school and treat resources with respect.
Attendance	Satisfactory. Although attendance figures are below the national average, the school has secure procedures to monitor attendance rates and follow up unexplained absences. Unauthorised absence is below the national average.
Ethos*	Satisfactory. Pupils' attitudes to their work are good; relationships are positive and the school now has a greater commitment to raising standards.
Leadership and management	Unsatisfactory. Although the management of the school works successfully to promote positive team-work, the headteacher and governors have insufficiently addressed weaknesses in management identified at the time of the last OFSTED inspection. There is an

insufficiently clear educational direction for the school and there are weaknesses in monitoring the quality of teaching and standards of attainment.

Curriculum	Satisfactory, overall. Pupils are given a broad and balanced experience across the National Curriculum, enjoy many visits out-of-school and participate in some extra-curricular activities. There is a weakness in that the school has no whole-school curricular plan.
Pupils with special educational needs	Good. This is well managed by the special educational needs co-ordinator and the provision is well implemented by class teachers and teaching assistants.
Spiritual, moral, social & cultural development	It is good for the pupils' social development and satisfactory for their moral, spiritual and cultural development.
Staffing, resources and accommodation	Satisfactory. Teachers are appropriately qualified; many teaching assistants possess relevant qualifications; resources are well used and existing accommodation is adequate to meet the demands of the curriculum.
Value for money	Satisfactory.

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

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The parents' views of the school

What most parents like about the school

- IV. The school encourages them to be involved in the life of the school.
- V. The school is approachable when they have problems.
- VI. They are well informed about what their children are taught.
- VII. The children like the school.
- VIII. The school encourages positive values and attitudes.
- IX. The school endeavours to involve their children in more than lessons.

What some parents are not happy about

- X. Some parents felt that their complaints were
- XI. They were not informed sufficiently about
- XII. They were not happy about the (felt there was insufficient and others too much).

The findings of this inspection concur with the positive views of the parents. During the inspection, there was no evidence that complaints were not dealt with appropriately. The school makes it possible for parents to meet with their children's class teacher on a weekly basis, by appointment. In addition, annual reports provide detailed analysis of what pupils cover in each subject, the attainment they achieve, the progress they make and any targets for improvement.

KEY ISSUES FOR ACTION

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

i. Improve the quality of leadership and management through:

- devising and implementing a programme for the headteacher to monitor systematically the quality of teaching and pupils' work throughout the school;
- reappraising the workload of the deputy headteacher in order to make the most effective use of her many skills;
- involving governors more in strategic planning and in influencing priorities for school development;
- appointing subject leaders for those areas of the National Curriculum as yet uncoordinated so that teachers may be supported, resources better organised and the quality of provision monitored.

(paragraphs 31, 33, 46-48, 51, 56, 110, 115, 122, 134, 142, 147, 148, 154, 160 inclusive)

i. Ensure that the most able pupils in the school make sufficient progress by:

- encouraging teachers to structure lessons so that the more able pupils do not mark time waiting for others to catch up and that they work on tasks in all lessons which consistently challenge them;
- compiling a register of the most able pupils with a view to targeting them, more overtly, for accelerated learning;
- providing pupils with more open-ended investigative tasks and encouraging them to work more independently or as a group in class.

(paragraphs 15, 16, 27, 28, 29, 33, 82, 98, 99, 101, 108, 109, 114, 140, 143, 146 inclusive)

i. Develop a whole-school curricular plan through which:

- teachers will be better informed about how to integrate key skills throughout the curriculum;
- teachers will be better able to integrate learning between and across subjects;
- a better link is made between individual subjects which, at present, are planned and taught in isolation and with little regard to common skills or content.

(paragraphs 28, 30, 31, 33, 46, 62, 86, 87, 115, 122, 152, 157, 160 inclusive)

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

- The infant toilets are in poor condition and are not cleaned thoroughly.
(paragraphs 42, 52, 63 inclusive)
- There is a lack of safely sited agility apparatus for the children aged under five years.
(paragraphs 53, 63, 69 inclusive)
- Library space is very confined and there is no appropriate classification system.
(paragraphs 9, 52, 53, 89 inclusive)

INTRODUCTION

Characteristics of the school

1. Chattenden Primary School is situated in a small village on the outskirts of the Medway towns. At present, there are 192 pupils on roll, with the same number of boys and girls. Until a few years ago, the school took many pupils from an adjacent army barracks, which meant the school had to deal with a much higher turnover of pupils than found nationally. The army barracks were purchased by a housing association and the nature of the school's intake changed considerably as a result. However, the turnover of pupils remains high. Many more pupils with special educational needs now enter the school. At present, there are 94 pupils registered by the school as having special educational needs. This is very high when compared nationally. In addition, a well above average percentage of pupils have significant special educational needs. No pupils come from homes where English is an additional language nor from ethnic minority backgrounds. Both of these figures are below the national average.
2. The school has seven children aged under five years on roll. The school admits children to the school either in September or January, depending upon when their fifth birthday falls. Induction procedures include visits to the school and the child's home and a welcome and information pack. Children aged under five years are taught in the Reception class. They generally enter the school at below average levels of attainment.
3. Apart from the changes since the last OFSTED inspection, already listed in an earlier paragraph, the school has grown in size from having five classes to seven. This also means that all year groups are taught separately instead of in mixed age classes. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs has increased from around 20 in 1996 to nearly 50 per cent, at the present time. Although the very high turnover rate has decreased in the last few years as many as 20 per cent of pupils entered or left the school in the last academic year. The number of teachers and teaching assistants has increased and many new governors have been appointed.
4. The school aims to foster pupils' intellectual, social, emotional and physical development, to help each pupil to learn how to learn, to instil in pupils an enjoyment of learning and a sense of achievement and that the staff should work together as a team. The school development plan indicates priorities and a plan of action for the present financial year and a brief overview of curricular development to 2002. The priorities include the successful implementation and consolidation of the National Numeracy Strategy and National Literacy Strategy, and improvements in the provision for information technology and in the fabric of the school building. The plan provides a timetable for development but lacks detail beyond the end of March 2000.

5. Key indicators

Attainment at Key Stage 1¹

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for latest reporting year:		Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		1999	15	15	30
National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics	
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	Boys	13	13	11	
	Girls	10	12	15	
	Total	23	25	26	
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	77(94)	83(94)	87(94)	
	National	82(80)	83(81)	87(84)	
Teacher Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science	
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	Boys	7	8	14	
	Girls	10	9	11	
	Total	17	17	25	
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	57(97)	57(93)	83(100)	
	National	82(81)	86(85)	87(86)	

¹Percentages in parentheses refer to the year before the latest reporting year

Attainment at Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for latest reporting year:		Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		1999	13	11	24
National Curriculum Test Results		English	Mathematics	Science	
Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	Boys	4	7	10	
	Girls	8	6	9	
	Total	12	13	19	
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	50(50)	54(45)	79(75)	
	National	70(65)	69(59)	78(69)	
Teacher Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science	
Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	Boys	4	8	7	
	Girls	7	7	8	
	Total	11	15	15	
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	46(60)	62 (50)	62(65)	
	National	68(65)	69(65)	75(72)	

• **Attendance**

Percentage of half days (sessions) missed			%
through absence for the latest complete reporting year: 1999	Authorised	School	7.1
	Absence	National comparative data	5.7
	Unauthorised	School	0.02
	Absence	National comparative data	0.5

• **Exclusions**

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

• **Quality of teaching**

Percentage of teaching observed which is:		%
	Very good or better	6
	Satisfactory or better	100
	Less than satisfactory	0

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

PART A: ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS AT THE SCHOOL

Attainment and progress

6. Analysis of the 1999 end of Key Stage 2 national test results shows that the percentage of pupils attaining Level 4, or above, in English and mathematics was well below the national average and that the percentage of pupils attaining Level 4, or above, in science was in line with the average. The percentage of pupils attaining at the higher level, Level 5, was above the national average in English, below that average in mathematics and at that average in science. When the averages of the school's test data are compared with all schools, they show standards in English and mathematics to be well below average and standards in science to be average. When these averages are compared with similar schools, they show standards below average in English and mathematics and average in science.

7. When the end of Key Stage 2 results at Level 4, or above, for 1999 are compared with the period from 1996, they show that standards have declined overall, particularly in the last three years. During this period, across the three core subjects, of English, mathematics and science, boys have performed marginally better than girls. It should be noted that the fall in standards closely mirrors the increasing number of pupils entering the school with significant special educational needs. The percentage of these pupils has grown from about 20 per cent in 1996 to 50 per cent in 1999. This is likely to have had a negative impact upon average standards.

8. The findings of this inspection are that the proportion of pupils in the present Year 6, who are attaining standards in line with the national expectation, is average in English, mathematics, science and information technology. An average percentage meets the expectations of the locally Agreed Syllabus for religious education. Standards in art are above average and they are average in all other subjects of the National Curriculum. These findings are an improvement upon the 1999 end of key stage test results in English and mathematics but similar in science. Since the last inspection, at Key Stage 2, there has been an improvement in standards in writing, information technology, religious education, design and technology and geography. Standards are similar in all other subjects. Standards in literacy and numeracy are average.

9. In English, by the age of eleven, pupils speak confidently and fluently and recall plots and characters from the books that they read. They are not sufficiently aware of standard classification systems to enable them to find books and information quickly in the library. Pupils write for different purposes and readers, as when they write a newspaper article and headlines. They use adjectives and adverbs to good effect when writing imaginatively, or descriptively. Higher attaining pupils draft and organise their work coherently. In mathematics, pupils work at good speed mentally and use a wide range of strategies to calculate in their heads. They know how the four operations relate inversely and work with numbers with up to six digits when adding or subtracting. They convert fractions to decimals and percentages, identify features of named three-dimensional shapes, reflect, rotate and translate shapes, measure angles with a protractor and compile frequency graphs to illustrate data they collect about each other's heights. By the age of eleven, in science, most pupils understand the need to make a fair test. They know that materials change as a result of alterations in temperature and through adding or removing water. They work safely and are aware that a balanced diet and exercise will benefit organs and muscles in the human body. In information technology, pupils word process accurately, using different fonts and produce a newspaper using a 'publishing' program.

They enter data they collect, in mathematics and science, into data handling programs and print out graphs produced. In religious education, pupils know that each of the Christian, Sikh and Jewish religions have different special books, festivals and rituals, but that they share some common features such as prayer. In art, pupils attain above average standards when they copy designs for Greek pots, paint in the style of Van Gogh and talk about the techniques of different schools of art. In design and technology, they dismantle a slipper to find out how it is constructed, base their design drawings on what they discover and make and evaluate their product with a certain specification in mind. Pupils in Year 6 know how to find information in an atlas, use co-ordinates to locate features on a map and understand that communities consist of a mixture of residential, business and leisure buildings and amenities. In history, they compare their own lives with that of a Victorian child and differentiate between primary and secondary sources. In music, they sing

familiar and new songs enthusiastically and play tuned and untuned instruments with a sense of tempo and rhythm. In physical education, pupils jump and land gracefully, dance with a sense of mood and effect and follow rules with a sense of fair play when playing football or netball. A significant majority of pupils swim 25 metres safely by the time they leave the school.

10. Analysis of the 1999 end of Key Stage 1 national test results shows that the percentage of pupils attaining at the national expectation of Level 2 was below the average in reading and at the average in writing and mathematics. The proportion of pupils achieving higher levels was above average in reading and mathematics and below the average in writing. When the averages of the school's test data are compared with all schools, they show standards to be below the average in reading and writing and at the average in mathematics. When these averages are compared with similar schools, they show that standards are at the average in reading and writing and above average in mathematics. It should be noted that of the 1999 Year 2 cohort, 58 per cent of pupils had significant special educational needs, which is likely to have affected average standards negatively.

11. In the period 1996-1998, standards fluctuated, but always above the national average. In 1999, standards fell below the national average in reading and writing. As well as a relatively larger proportion of pupils with special educational needs, the Year 2 cohort last year also contained many pupils who had not started their education at this school, and reportedly entered the school with below average attainment in literacy. The attainment of boys and girls is similar and any differences reflect national trends.

12. The findings of this inspection are that the proportion of the pupils in the present Year 2 who are attaining standards in line with national expectations is average in speaking and listening and science, but below average in reading, writing and mathematics. Overall, standards in literacy and numeracy are below average. This is in line with the 1999 test results for reading and writing but represents lower standards in mathematics. However, this Year 2 cohort has 66 per cent of pupils with special educational needs, which will have an even more negative impact upon average standards than last year. Pupils attain above average standards in art and average standards in all other subjects of the National Curriculum and in meeting the expectations of the locally Agreed Syllabus for religious education.

13. By the age of seven, in speaking and listening, pupils speak clearly for their age and listen attentively in whole-class activities. Fewer readily recognise the sounds indicated by a combination of letters in a word.

Although a few write coherent sentences, which are carefully constructed and spelt correctly, many do not achieve this. In mathematics, by the end of the key stage, many pupils have difficulty in adding or subtracting accurately beyond ten. They are insecure in their number bonds to 20 and in identifying fractions of a whole. More able pupils measure straight lines accurately with a 30 centimetre rule and work out how to measure a line more than 30 centimetres long with the same instrument. Many pupils calculate too slowly mentally and find difficulty in remembering which operation is used to solve a problem. In science, pupils draw and successfully build an electric circuit and distinguish between magnetic and non-magnetic materials.

In information technology, they control a programmable toy and save and retrieve their work. By the time they are seven, in religious education, pupils retell stories about Jesus, understand the significance of Christmas and Easter and know that Diwali is a feature of the Hindu religion. In art, pupils choose suitable colours to mix together to represent the feel of autumn. In geography, they know that many countries lie across the ocean and that people live in different types of houses and dress differently according to the climate. In design and technology, pupils draw up menus with other pupils' likes and dislikes in mind and in history, they place photographs of themselves correctly onto a timeline. Pupils of seven respond to drum beats, compose a repetitive rhythm and sing with low or high volume to reflect a sense of mood. In physical education, they travel safely and dance in a sequence of steps to create effect or in synchrony with a partner.

14. By the age of five, children attain average standards overall and in all areas of their learning, they make good progress. In their personal development, they relate well to each other and adults, play sensibly together, share equipment and take turns. Many have a good sense of right and wrong and seek help confidently. In language and literacy, children attain average standards and make good progress. They listen attentively, respond readily to questions, enjoy looking at books, know words and pictures convey meaning and recognise and write their own name. Children achieve average standards in mathematics and make good progress. Many count to ten and order numbers to ten correctly. They understand concepts such as 'full', 'empty', 'more', 'less', 'lighter', 'heavier' and sort objects according to colour and shape. In their knowledge and understanding of the world, children plant seeds and bulbs and comment upon their development, know the routine of their day, are familiar with the school grounds and make masks from paper

and models from clay. They use the keyboard and mouse to play simple games on the computer. In their creative development the children attain average standards and make good progress. They explore sound and colour, use their senses to find out about texture and aroma, paint pictures, make models and play simple untuned instruments rhythmically. The children's attainment in physical development is average and they make good progress. They run, jump, climb, skip, pedal and steer wheeled toys, stopping and starting at appropriate times, and cut and glue accurately.

15. Overall, at Key Stage 1, pupils make satisfactory progress. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress for their capabilities. Overall, satisfactory progress in English is evident as pupils speak more confidently, read more fluently and use an increasing number of cues to help them read better. Progress in writing is less evident by the end of the key stage. In mathematics, pupils make satisfactory progress in their understanding of number patterns and in adding and subtracting numbers with tens and units. They make slower progress in mental mathematics and, in some lessons, higher attaining pupils are not insufficiently challenged to make the progress they should. In science, pupils progress in their understanding of plant and human growth and how electricity works and is used. In information technology, they become increasingly aware of the different uses of computers, video recorders and tapes and in religious education, they increase their knowledge of religious stories and celebrations. Good progress in art is evident as they become more aware of different techniques and media and in design and technology, pupils make satisfactory progress in their awareness of the need to make objects for purpose. In geography, pupils make progress in their knowledge of routes and maps and in history, they develop a better sense of chronology and the history of their own families. Pupils develop their musical skills so that by the time they reach Year 2, they sing more tunefully and are more aware of the different sounds created by instruments. In physical education, pupils make good progress as they learn to control their movements better and work with others more safely.

16. At Key Stage 2, pupils make satisfactory progress overall. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress. In some lessons, higher attaining pupils do not make sufficient progress, as a result of being set tasks which do not challenge them enough. This was an issue identified in the last OFSTED inspection report. The school has made some progress in helping higher attaining pupils to achieve higher levels in national tests. However, this still remains a weakness in the school. Pupils make satisfactory progress overall in English, as they speak at greater length and with more effect. They make good progress in reading covering a wider range of books and non-fiction texts and progress satisfactorily when they write using a greater range of styles. In mathematics, they improve the speed of their mental calculations, work with increasingly larger numbers, become more proficient at estimating and predicting number patterns and sort and illustrate more clearly. In science, pupils use an increasingly wide range of scientific vocabulary, apply their previous knowledge in a variety of scientific contexts and take into account more variables when investigating. Progress is evident in information technology as pupils use more functions on the computer and manipulate programs to combine pictures and text when producing a newsletter. Their knowledge of the different ceremonies, festivals and artefacts of Christianity, Sikhism and Judaism develops in religious education. In art, they make good progress as they become more aware of, and are better able to work in, the style of different famous artists. Satisfactory progress in design and technology is evident as pupils take more account of design specifications and the need to evaluate their work. In geography, they progress in their ability to compare and contrast communities in different parts of the world, with their own. In history, they increase their knowledge of famous people and become more aware of the influences which might make evidence suspect. Pupils make good progress in music when they use an increasing number of criteria to appraise musical composition and also in physical education as they become more proficient in jumping and landing gracefully and in their awareness of the tactics involved in defending and attacking in team games. The school has successfully met recent targets for improvement and has indicated realistic and challenging targets for the future.

• **Attitudes, behaviour and personal development**

17. Pupils have good attitudes to learning. This is a similar judgement to that made in the last OFSTED inspection report. They are interested in lessons and usually listen well to the teacher and to each other. In a Year 1 literacy lesson, the pupils all listened carefully while each told their news to the class. Pupils pay attention to their work and persevere well when they find their tasks difficult. In a Year 3 mathematics lesson, children had considerable difficulty with their task, but kept working and were pleased when they succeeded. Pupils have the ability to work collaboratively, particularly in art and design and technology. In a Year 2 lesson, pupils took pleasure in the materials they used and enjoyed working together on their designs. They show pride in their work, which they present tidily and neatly.

18. Behaviour is good. Pupils usually settle quickly to their work. Children aged under five years behave well and are interested in learning. They enjoy many activities and like stories and rhymes. They play sensibly, and learn to be aware of others, take turns, and conform to simple classroom conventions. Whilst most children enjoy playing alongside others and make comments to them, a substantial majority of them play collaboratively for short periods, and show good social development for age at this stage in the year. Children are confident and happy in their classroom environment, which enables them to explore and experiment. Year 6 pupils move quickly from discussion to practical work. Any talking is about the work they are doing. Pupils play well together in the playground and there was no evidence of bullying during the inspection. There has been one exclusion this year and this rate is static.

19. Relationships are good. Pupils respect the staff and have confidence in them. The staff show respect for the pupils and are willing to discuss any problems with them or their parents.

20. Personal development is good. Older pupils volunteer to be prefects and take their duties seriously. Younger pupils are given opportunities to act as monitors. For example, Year 4 run the Book Club. All classes have register monitors. Pupils are pleased to accept responsibility and endeavour to carry out their duties as well as possible. They develop an awareness of their responsibilities as citizens by raising money for charity and donating their harvest gifts to elderly folk within the village.

• **Attendance**

21. Attendance is satisfactory overall. This is a similar judgement to that of the previous OFSTED report. The actual rate of attendance is below the national average. This is because some families are not aware of the importance of attending school and do not encourage their children to attend. In addition, the school is required to keep a pupil's name on roll when he or she moves and attends a different school. Authorised absence is higher than the national average. The main reason for this is illness. Unauthorised absence is low and is below the national average. The school has good systems in place to monitor the rate of attendance and to follow up any unexplained absences. Ninety-eight per cent of parents who returned the questionnaire felt that their child enjoys coming to school. The majority of pupils arrive punctually each morning. However, a number of pupils in Years 5 and 6 are late. Registration is an efficient and established routine in each class.

• **QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED**

• **Teaching**

22. Overall, the quality of teaching is satisfactory. Of the 52 lessons observed during the inspection, three were very good, 21 good, and 28 satisfactory. This is a good improvement since the last OFSTED inspection when only 80 per cent of lessons were judged to be satisfactory or better. Since the last OFSTED inspection, teachers link their lessons much more closely to the National Curriculum and the locally Agreed Syllabus for religious education and there have been improvements in teachers' subject knowledge in design and technology and information technology.

23. The quality of teaching for children aged under five years of age is good. Two teachers share the class and they have good understanding of the learning needs of such young children in terms of their emotional, behavioural and curricular needs. Teachers deal with the children sensitively and all adults who work in the Reception class contribute to the very positive atmosphere created. Teachers plan sessions for

pupils which are well balanced and they consistently promote the development of the children's language skills.

24. At Key Stage 1, the quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. Of the fifteen lessons observed at this key stage, four lessons were good and eleven satisfactory. The quality of teaching is good in English and art and it is satisfactory in all other subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education.

25. The quality of teaching in Key Stage 2 is satisfactory overall. Of the 32 lessons observed at this key stage, three lessons were very good, 12 good and 17 satisfactory. At this key stage, the quality of teaching in English, art and physical education is good. In all other subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education, it is satisfactory.

26. There are similar strengths and weaknesses in the quality of teaching in both key stages. A particular strength is the way that teachers manage the behaviour and learning of the considerable number of pupils with significant special educational needs within each class. Teachers plan carefully to ensure that these pupils are set tasks, which closely reflect their needs and which are linked well to the targets in pupils' individual education plans. In addition, class teachers and teaching assistants work closely together to provide individuals and groups of pupils with well-targeted support. This was evident in a mental mathematics session about inverse operations where the teaching assistant repeated instructions and questions in order to clarify and reinforce concepts for the lower attaining pupils. This ensured that they played a full part in the lesson and made good progress for their previous attainment. Relationships in classrooms are good throughout the school and, where these are particularly strong, teachers praise pupils frequently when they achieve success. It is clear from this approach that pupils are motivated to attend well, strive for further success and feel confident in answering questions, even if they are unsure of the correctness of their answer. Those teachers who have good or very good subject knowledge use this to explain new concepts and reinforce previous learning well. They use a variety of methods to help pupils who do not understand new work immediately. This flexible approach means that all pupils make good progress in these lessons. This was evident in a very good gymnastics lesson, in which the teacher helped some pupils, who initially struggled to jump and land with a twist turn, to overcome their difficulties. By personal demonstration and clear instruction, the teacher helped these pupils to improve their technique and gain success. Several teachers have high expectations of pupils' response and the depth of their understanding. This was evident in a very good English lesson about writing different introductory paragraphs for novels and reports. Pupils were expected to understand the reasons why they should be different and apply this understanding to their own writing. As a result, all pupils made good progress in the lesson. Other strengths in teaching include the effective use of good quality resources, which support and clarify pupils' understanding, and good use of homework to reinforce existing knowledge or promote new learning. The teaching of literacy and numeracy is satisfactory overall. It is good for literacy and teachers use the recommended structure for lessons well particularly to improve pupils' reading. Although satisfactory overall, teachers' implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy is inconsistent in ensuring that pupils are provided with the adequate amount of time for mental mathematics and for summarising their learning at the end of lessons.

27. Weaknesses in teaching are linked to some lack of subject knowledge, insufficient confidence in new teaching methods for the National Numeracy Strategy and, in some cases, a lack of challenge for the higher attaining pupils. In some lessons, teachers spend too long attempting to explain new learning to all pupils even when some have understood quickly. As a result, higher attaining pupils mark time waiting to undertake tasks which will require them to apply their knowledge and they make insufficient progress in the lesson. Teachers, in some lessons, fail to give higher attaining pupils enough responsibility to continue tasks at their own pace. Often, they finish a task quickly and wait some time to be set more challenging work or are given another worksheet to complete rather than being set a more open ended task. One or two teachers are over loud in expositions or methods of control. As a result, some pupils are less willing to contribute answers and ideas.

28. Teachers plan lessons carefully. Analyses of test results and baseline assessments are used to identify strengths and weaknesses in pupils' attainment in English and mathematics. Although some teachers' plans reflect this knowledge, there is inconsistency in this practice across the school.

The curriculum and assessment

29. Overall, the curriculum provided by the school is satisfactory. It includes all subjects of the National Curriculum, together with religious education and personal and social education. Curricular provision is broad and balanced and meets statutory requirements, where these apply. This is an improvement since the last OFSTED inspection. The governing body has chosen not to teach sex education in the school. There are satisfactory arrangements for making pupils aware of the dangers of abusing drugs. Teaching hours match national guidelines and time allocations for the different subjects are appropriate. There is daily teaching of literacy and numeracy for which time is appropriately utilised and provision is sound. Governors are aware of the overall policy towards the development of literacy and numeracy skills. The school is implementing the National Literacy Strategy satisfactorily and is beginning to implement the National Numeracy Strategy. Swimming is taught to pupils in Key Stage 2. The curriculum generally promotes the aims of the school effectively. Curricular provision promotes pupils' intellectual, physical and personal development and prepares them adequately for the next stage of their education. The school meets the curricular requirements of those pupils on its special educational needs register well. Pupils' needs are appropriately assessed, parents are involved in setting and reviewing their child's targets and advice and support are sought from outside agencies where appropriate. However, curricular planning provides insufficient opportunities for pupils to undertake independent activities and the needs of higher attaining pupils are not always fully met, particularly in providing sufficient opportunities for extended writing.

30. The curriculum for children aged under five years is good. It is appropriately structured to cover the six designated areas of learning and development. Children move into the National Curriculum when individuals fully achieve the Desirable Learning Outcomes of these areas of learning. The range of curricular provision is both broad and balanced and provides for progress and variety in all the six areas of learning and development. However, although the policy for the curriculum for children aged under five refers to the six designated areas of learning and development, medium and long term planning is based on the separate subjects of the National Curriculum. This overcomplicates planning, and it lacks explicit attention to provision for personal and social development and to some aspects of physical development. Assessment is very good. The Local Education Authority's baseline assessment is administered during the first half-term, and is used again, if necessary, to check progress over the year. Individual targets are set from the baseline outcomes, are monitored throughout the year and reviewed and evaluated at the end of the year. Thorough records are passed to the next teacher, along with the results of some specific assessment activities in writing, mathematics and science. Cumulative daily assessment includes recording the children's choices of activities, and notes written about their learning and personal and social progress. The use of these assessments is very good. Planning is influenced by such assessments and this ensures that the children develop their skills progressively.

31. The previous OFSTED report identified the lack of a whole-school curricular plan as a weakness of the school. This is still the case and remains a key issue for the school to address. The school now has policies for all subjects, apart from information technology, and has a scheme of work for each subject, except physical education. This represents an improvement since the last inspection. However, the lack of a whole-school curricular plan means that there is no written guidance on how to link areas of learning systematically or to reinforce basic literacy and numeracy skills across subjects. As a result, there is no sense of a whole-school strategy to address weaknesses such as extended writing, data handling skills or problem solving throughout all areas of pupils' learning. In addition, there are no subject co-ordinators for religious education, design and technology, history and geography. This means that, within these subjects, there is no mechanism for ensuring that the school's scheme of work is taught in every class or, that key skills are progressively built upon. There is no school policy for equality of opportunity. However, in practice, pupils, apart from some of the higher attainers, receive full equality and access to the curriculum. The school organises trips and visits for each year group, to enhance pupils' social and cultural development. Local visits include the theatre, a local walk and farm study, a river study, an outing to Rochester Cathedral and a study of the coast outside Margate. These visits contribute to pupils' knowledge and understanding of history and geography as well as providing cultural opportunities. Extra-curricular activities include choir in the spring and summer terms, and football, gymnastics and art and craft. These are well supported by the pupils. No opportunities are provided for football and netball teams to compete in matches against local schools or in district events. The provision for extra-curricular activities is satisfactory but the opportunity for pupils to take part in extra-curricular competitive games is unsatisfactory.

32. There is a homework policy that identifies numeracy, literacy, spelling and research for topics along with revision for pupils at the upper end of Key Stage 2. As pupils move through the school the frequency with which homework is set increases. Homework tasks have a sound effect upon progress and attainment.
33. The newly revised assessment policy includes links with parents. Assessment is included in the policies for English, mathematics and science and evidence is recorded about each pupil and is used to monitor progress. This information is passed on for the use of the pupils' next teacher. Teachers use the year-to-year assessments to monitor progress. The assessment co-ordinator uses classroom teaching times to monitor progress in Year 2 and Year 4, but insufficient time is spent in monitoring work across the school and, as a result, weaknesses in teaching and learning are not identified and acted upon. The English and art co-ordinators have opportunities to work alongside colleagues in classrooms and to monitor work but no other classroom monitoring is undertaken and this is a weakness. As a result, co-ordinators have little understanding of how to improve the teaching of the subject for which they have responsibility. There is little evidence of day-to-day assessment to inform teachers' planning and the higher attaining pupils in particular are sometimes insufficiently challenged by their work. A marking policy is used by teachers and this often encourages pupils but its value in helping pupils to improve their work is limited. The annual reports to parents are satisfactory but are sent home on the last day of term and do not allow any time for parents to discuss their child's progress with teachers. Procedures for transfer to secondary education are satisfactory although some parents feel that not enough is done to support those pupils who wish to seek a selective place in one of the local grammar schools.

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

34. Spiritual development remains satisfactory. Daily assemblies include speakers from the community who make a positive contribution to the development of pupils' spiritual awareness. There is some evidence of spiritual development in lessons. Children aged under five years learn about prayers and have time for reflection. They enjoy stories which have a simple moral and learn the meaning of Christmas. In a Year 1 science lesson on magnetism, pupils were thrilled when they felt the pull of the magnet on a paper clip. Teachers do not always take the opportunity to develop pupils' spiritual awareness in lessons. There has been minimal improvement in this since the last inspection.
35. Pupils' moral development is satisfactory. They know right from wrong. The school aims to develop responsible attitudes both towards others and towards property. Pupils also begin to learn about their moral responsibilities when, for example, the vicar comes to talk to them in religious education lessons and assembly.
36. Provision for social development is good. Children aged under five years develop their social skills through play. In class, there are some useful opportunities for pupils to improve their social skills in class discussions. The quality of relationships is good and pupils are confident enough to share their views with others in class and with adults. Pupils play well together at break and lunch-times. Older pupils look after the younger ones. Where necessary, staff remind pupils of their responsibilities to play fairly with each other and encourage them to carry out a rota of jobs in the classroom.
37. Provision for cultural development is satisfactory overall. Children aged under five years experience stories from other cultures and explore the world around them. Pupils have the opportunity to listen to different types of music such as American jazz. In art, they learn about the work and styles of famous artists such as Renoir and Monet. Some cultural festivals such as Diwali and the Chinese New Year are celebrated. Opportunities for pupils to learn about religions other than Christianity are limited.
38. Recently, Year 6 enjoyed a theatre visit to see a performance of 'Romeo and Juliet'. However, there are few opportunities for pupils to broaden their cultural awareness and there has been little improvement since the last inspection.

Support, guidance and pupils' welfare

39. The school continues to give a high priority to the welfare of its pupils. Staff know the pupils well and keep a close watch on their personal development. Problems are discussed jointly by all members of staff. Procedures to monitor pupils' academic progress are satisfactory. Pupils have tests regularly and appropriate records are kept. At the end of the academic year, the current class teacher meets with the designated teacher for the new school year, to share information on progress. Induction procedures for children entering the Reception class are satisfactory. The arrangements for admission conform to the policy of the Local Education Authority. Children are welcomed into school and are made to feel safe and secure in their classroom. Relationships are very good and the adults working with them have sensitivity to the needs of such young children. Pastoral care is good. Teachers and learning support assistants care very much for the children. The school maintains a close liaison with the local high school and many pupils move on to this school safe in the knowledge that they will know some of the staff and pupils. The procedures include visits for pupils to the school, and meetings for parents.

40. Measures to promote discipline and good behaviour are satisfactory. Class teachers have the main responsibility for ensuring good behaviour. Staff expect pupils to behave appropriately and most respond well to staff expectations. They receive certificates for good behaviour each week in assembly and the pupils appreciate these awards.

41. Arrangements for monitoring attendance are good. Teachers mark registers correctly. Parents are continually reminded to notify the school of reasons for absence. When this does not happen, a letter is sent home. The educational welfare officer visits the school regularly, each half-term, to check registers and to discuss problems of attendance and behaviour.

42. Child protection and health and safety measures are satisfactory. There is no specific child protection policy but the school follows the Local Education Authority's guidelines. The headteacher is the designated officer. Staff are aware of procedures and all concerns are discussed in detail. The school co-operates fully with local social services and attends case conferences as necessary. The school keeps adequate records for health and safety purposes. The infants' toilets are in poor condition. The cleaning of the toilets is insufficiently thorough. Governors on the buildings committee inspect the premises regularly. Staff are aware of potential health and safety issues in lessons and have appropriate procedures to ensure the safety of the pupils. There is a medical room and some staff are trained in first aid. This ensures that any pupils who have minor accidents are treated promptly and appropriately.

Partnership with parents and the community

43. Good links with parents and the community have been maintained since the previous inspection. Parents regard the school as a friendly community school and feel very welcome. They appreciate the availability of staff and welcome the opportunity to discuss any problems with them. The quality of information that parents receive is good. Newsletters keep parents informed about school events. The school prospectus is a helpful introduction to the school. The governors' Annual Report to parents is a useful summary of the school year. However, its presentation is drab and does not encourage parents to read it. Pupils' annual reports are sound. They contain appropriate targets to help the pupils improve. Parents dislike the reports being distributed on the last day of the summer term and say that there is no opportunity for discussion. However, the school's view is that reports form the basis of discussion with parents in the first term of the new school year. The school continues to run the Wednesday 'clinic' for parents. Teachers are available at the end of each Wednesday for parents to consult them about their child's progress. The clinic has replaced termly parents' meetings. Parents appreciate this innovative approach. At the pre-inspection parents' meeting, parents raised concerns about their lack of information on what their children study. However, 98 per cent of parents who returned the questionnaire felt that they are kept informed about the curriculum. In the past, the school has organised curricular workshops but few parents attended. Some classes produce a curricular statement, which goes out to parents at the end of the year. This sets out what has been studied in each subject over the year. Distribution at the end of the year is too late for parents to become involved in their child's work.

44. There is good liaison between staff and parents before children start school, and open communication is maintained after children have begun school. There are meetings for parents to explain baseline assessment. Each parent is seen in the second half of the child's first term, and information is

provided about the outcomes of baseline assessment and the targets drawn up as a result. Parents have access to staff, and the school tries to promote an open door policy, within obvious limits. Liaison is also maintained between the school and feeder organisations. Parental involvement in children's education is satisfactory. A few parents help in class and on school trips. An active parent /school association raises funds for the school. A home/school contract is in place which sets out the responsibilities of the school and the family towards their child's education. At present, only half of the parents have signed this contract. There is evidence that improvements in mental mathematics have been supported as a result of this agreement. The home/school contact book is a useful means of dialogue between parents and teachers. Parents are invited to school events and attendance is good. It is less good at more formal meetings, such as the annual governors' meeting for parents.

45. Links with the community in order to support learning are good. Visits to the local church increase pupils' awareness of the Christian religion. Year 1 pupils walk around the school for local community studies. Year 4 increase their geographical knowledge by a visit to Upnor for a river study. In order to understand the concept of giving and to increase their awareness of the needs of older generations, children donate their harvest gifts to elderly folk in the area. In addition, they invite older members of the community to their Harvest service and entertain them afterwards.

· **THE MANAGEMENT AND EFFICIENCY OF THE SCHOOL**

· **Leadership and management**

46. Overall, the quality of leadership and management is unsatisfactory. At the time of the last inspection, a considerable number of weaknesses were identified in the leadership and management of the school and some of these remain. The headteacher and governors now have a school development plan, which details priorities and action for the financial year 1999-2000. In addition, a brief overview of planned developments within the curriculum exists for the period summer 1999 to spring 2002. There is, however, no rationale for this or any consideration of the financial implications. In the light of its responsibilities to ensure the strategic development of the school, the governing body is, at present, insufficiently involved in setting priorities or in monitoring the progress of their implementation. Newly appointed governors indicate that more direct involvement in strategic planning and monitoring, especially for the implementation of the National Literacy Strategy and National Numeracy Strategy, is now occurring. However, the headteacher and governors still do not provide a sufficiently clear educational direction for the work of the school. The lack of a coherent, whole-school curricular plan means that subjects are taught in isolation, without clear guidance about how they interrelate, or ways in which crucial understanding in areas of literacy and numeracy can be reinforced across the curriculum. The school now analyses test results. This identifies strengths and weaknesses in pupils' attainment. This information has been used to provide a focus for improvements in extended writing, spelling, handwriting and mental mathematics. However, insufficient monitoring of the impact of these strategies and the quality of teaching, particularly by the headteacher, means that the school has insufficient information about the quality of education in the school. This is a weakness in the management of the school.

47. The school meets its aims satisfactorily. There is a positive ethos and staff and pupils relate well and enjoy their work together. This ethos is reflected particularly in the provision for pupils with special educational needs and the school ensures that statutory requirements are fully met in terms of this provision. Although the school does not have a written equal opportunities policy, apart from some weaknesses in the provision for higher attaining pupils, there is, in practice, equality of opportunity. The deputy headteacher is very effective in co-ordinating this provision which ensures that these pupils receive good equality of opportunities and make good progress in their learning. The school has an improved commitment to achieving high standards. It has set targets for improvement in external test results that, given the much higher than average proportion of pupils with special educational needs in the school, are realistic and challenging. There are co-ordinators for many National Curriculum subjects, some of whom monitor teachers' plans and the quality of teaching. This is the case in English, where the headteacher teaches the English co-ordinator's class for half a day to release her for such duties. To a lesser extent, the mathematics co-ordinator has also monitored teaching. However, there are no co-ordinators for religious education, history, geography, or design and technology. This means that, within these subjects, there is no stated, or coherent system to support teachers or to judge the quality of their work and that of the pupils. Together

with the headteacher's lack of monitoring, this represents a weakness in the school's management.

48. Improvements in the management of the school since the last inspection include the full implementation of the National Curriculum, more rigour in managing the considerable changes which have occurred, clearer direction for the work of staff with management responsibilities and more and better use of the analysis of pupils' attainment and progress. Insufficient improvement has taken place in the governors ensuring that the headteacher has a detailed job description or in providing a whole-school curricular plan.

• **Staffing, accommodation and learning resources**

49. In the previous OFSTED inspection report, the number, experience and qualifications of teachers were found to be appropriate and the support provided by classroom assistants to be valuable. There was no systematic approach to ensure that the training needs of the school and of individual teachers were met, although training provision for classroom assistants was good. Induction procedures for newly qualified teachers were sound, although these lacked the required opportunities for new teachers to observe more experienced colleagues.

50. The findings of this inspection are that the number, experience and qualifications of the teaching staff meet the needs of the curriculum satisfactorily. There are six full-time teachers and seven part-time teachers. They provide the school with satisfactory expertise in most areas of the curriculum. Teachers' expertise is generally strong in English. Their experience ranges from those with two or three years' experience, to those nearing the end of their careers. The number, experience and qualifications of the school's education support staff are good. There are ten learning support assistants, three of whom are funded separately from the school's budget to work with pupils with statements of special educational need. The remaining staff are allocated on the basis of one assistant to each class. The assistants are experienced and well qualified. They have all completed, or are nearing completion of, the City and Guilds Certificate in Learning Support. They have also attended other relevant courses. Both teachers and learning support assistants have been recently trained to implement the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. There is also an administrative and clerical officer. Two visiting music teachers come to the school once a week to provide privately paid instrumental tuition for pupils. The work of the learning support assistants is particularly valuable and contributes well to the standards achieved by pupils in the school, and especially those with special educational needs.

51. The school's arrangements for the professional development of teaching and support staff are satisfactory and, in the case of the learning support assistants, very good. However, there is still no systematic approach to support the curricular needs of the school. Training has recently been related to the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. Training objectives are clearly designated in the school development plan, but there is no formal co-ordinated staff development policy or deployment strategy. The lack of such a formulated strategy allows uneven allocations of responsibilities to occur, such as the very heavy load carried by the deputy headteacher, whilst some younger members of staff have no whole-school curricular responsibilities. There is no staff handbook, although there are sets of appropriate notes supplied to newly qualified teachers joining the staff, which comprise the basis for such a document. The school's arrangements for the statutory appraisal of teachers meet requirements. Informal appraisal for learning support assistants is carried out by class teachers who are the line managers. Induction procedures for teachers new to the staff and for newly qualified teachers are satisfactory, although these are not yet formalised.

52. In the previous OFSTED inspection report, the quality of the school's accommodation was judged to be good and in a good state of repair apart from the field and its perimeter fencing. In the current inspection, accommodation is judged to satisfactorily support learning, although the library space is inadequate. The field and the fence have received the necessary attention. Most items in the current school development plan for repairs to the premises or refurbishment have been achieved. The refurbishment of pupils' toilets has not been completed on schedule. These cater for the younger children including those under five, and they are unattractive and in need of improvement. The school grounds are satisfactory.

53. In the previous OFSTED inspection report, learning resources in some subjects had weaknesses, specifically in English, history, religious education and information technology. In mathematics, design and technology and physical education, resources were satisfactory. In this inspection, resources in all subjects are adequate or satisfactory. In mathematics and science, they are good. In information technology, the

quantity of resources is good, with a good ratio of computers to pupils and adequate programmable devices. However, as noted in the previous OFSTED inspection report, a number of machines are now out-of-date, although the school plans gradually to replace them. The school has acquired some more up-to-date computers. Every classroom now has two up-to-date machines and this represents an improvement since the last inspection. The library has an adequate number of books but some are outdated and in a poor state. There is a secure area set aside for outdoor play adjacent to the Reception classroom. A satisfactory number and range of wheeled toys support children's physical development but there is no suitable agility apparatus situated safely.

• **The efficiency of the school**

54. In the last OFSTED inspection report, the quality of the school's financial management was a weakness. There has been considerable improvement since that time. Procedures for drafting the budget now have a secure basis. A draft budget, produced by the headteacher and the Chair of the finance committee, is presented to the full finance committee, redrafted if necessary, and presented to the full governing body for ratification. There is now a full inventory of the school's assets, procedures for controlling expenditure which include dual signatories on payments and regular financial updates for the finance committee and the whole governing body. The governors' Annual Report to parents now includes sufficient financial information.

55. The many and frequent changes in the school's numbers of pupils since the last OFSTED inspection meant that the school's budget ran into a substantial deficit, mainly as a result of the need to employ more teachers without any attached funding. Through prudent financial planning and strict budgetary control, the school has managed to eliminate the £32,000 deficit incurred in 1997/1998. The administrative staff fully support the main work of the school.

56. The school's deployment of the staff is satisfactory overall. Teaching assistants are deployed well to support pupils with special educational needs and they make a significant contribution to the good progress made by these pupils. Teachers are used satisfactorily as class teachers and particular expertise in physical education and music is used well to promote some good standards in these subjects. The deputy headteacher, at present, has too heavy a workload. As well as performing her duties as deputy headteacher, she is the school's special educational needs co-ordinator and science and music co-ordinator. The school has 50 per cent of its pupils with special educational needs which means that the deputy headteacher's time is almost fully used managing the special educational needs provision. As a result, she has little time to support or monitor teaching in science or music. This means that the necessary improvements in teachers' confidence and expertise in these areas are insufficiently addressed. Although the co-ordinator for English and mathematics have some time to monitor and support teaching and standards in their subjects, which is having a positive effect on pupils' progress, other staff are insufficiently involved in management roles. This means that some subjects lack co-ordination and development, which inhibits the professional development of some members of staff. The funds available for staff training are used satisfactorily despite the lack of a coherent staff development plan. Arrangements for the professional development of teaching assistants is good and contributes to the skill with which they support pupils with special educational needs in classrooms. The funds made available to support pupils with special educational needs are well used and this makes a significant contribution to their good progress.

57. Accommodation and learning resources are used satisfactory. The school hall is used to support learning in physical education, music, drama and religious education. It is regularly used for assemblies, meetings and productions and as a venue for extracurricular activities. The school field and playground are used for pupils' play and outdoor physical education lessons. The school library areas are used to promote pupils' understanding of classification systems and to teach ways to retrieve information. The 'quiet room' is used to teach computer skills, music and for watching educational television programmes. Recently purchased resources, such as overhead projectors and mathematics apparatus, contribute well to pupils' progress in literacy and numeracy.

58. The school makes good provision for pupils with special educational needs and for children aged under five years. Behaviour and the quality of relationships are good, pupils have good attitudes to their learning and the quality of teaching is always satisfactory and sometimes good. The overall quality of leadership and management is unsatisfactory. Within this context, the school offers satisfactory value for

money. This is a similar judgement to that made in the previous OFSTED report.

PART B: CURRICULUM AREAS AND SUBJECTS

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN UNDER FIVE

59. In the previous OFSTED inspection report, children aged under five years attained average standards and made good progress. The curriculum followed the National Curriculum. There were no key issues relating to provision for children aged under five years. In the current inspection, curricular provision is good and is based upon both the designated six areas of learning and the National Curriculum. The baseline assessment chosen by the Local Educational Authority is used successfully to identify children's attainment on entry. The children aged under five years attain average standards and make good progress towards achieving the national Desirable Learning Outcomes.

60. Children feel safe and secure in their classroom environment, which enables them to learn and to explore confidently. Relationships between adults and children are very good and children feel able to ask for help when they need it. Two teachers share the class and they are appropriately qualified and experienced. One full-time learning support assistant, who is experienced and well qualified, makes a valuable contribution to the children's achievements.

61. There is good provision for all the designated areas of learning and development. When the children are ready, they follow the National Curriculum. In particular, the role of play in children's development is well understood, and teachers use children's free choice to encourage social relationships and language. They also use opportunities, within more structured play and directed work, to support learning and enquiry.

62. The quality of teachers' assessments is very good. Teachers use the information from the Local Education Authority's baseline assessment, to set individual targets for children. Targets are monitored and reviewed every half term and annually. Teachers administer assessments tasks in writing, mathematics and science and the results of these are made known to the next teacher. Teachers also record daily the choices children make in their play and these notes are used to plan future lessons. There is an appropriate policy for the curriculum for children aged under five years and this is based on the designated areas of learning and development. However, there is no comprehensive scheme of work. Medium and long term plans are based on the National Curriculum. This makes planning unnecessarily unwieldy.

63. Liaison with parents is good, and they are kept well informed about their children's progress. Induction procedures are suitable and pastoral care is good. Accommodation for children aged under five years is satisfactory. The classroom is sufficiently spacious to allow for a variety of activities and lessons. There is direct access to a safe and secure play area. Toilets are set apart from the classroom and are unattractive. The planned refurbishment of these is overdue. Resources are adequate to support all areas of learning. However, there is no clambering apparatus sited on a suitable surface in the dedicated outdoor area.

64. Children enter the Reception class with attainment below average levels for age. During the first term they make good progress and achieve average attainment.

Personal and Social Development

65. The personal and social development of children aged under five meets expectations for age. They make good progress. All children aged under five years work and play independently or as part of a group, take turns, and ask for help when they need it. A substantial minority play collaboratively for short periods, such as in hospital play in the home corner. This is in advance of expectations for age and for the stage of the year. They have good opportunities to develop independence in selecting and pursuing activities, and both in free and structured play, they reinforce their social and language development. Children are eager to explore new learning, show confidence and start to make effective relationships with adults and sometimes with other children. They express their feelings, behave in appropriate ways and begin to develop sound ideas about right and wrong. Personal and social education and religious education lessons provide good opportunity to promote these values. The quality of teaching for personal and social education is good and adults relate well to the children and care for them sensitively.

Language and Literacy

66. The attainment of children aged under five years in language and literacy meets national expectations for age at this stage of the year. Having started from a base level below average, children make good progress. Children speak confidently and express their ideas, opinions and needs. They listen attentively and are generally eager to respond. Role-play and free play offer opportunities for the extension of language development. Children enjoy books and handle them well. They understand how they are organised, and a few children recognise some words. They all know that words and letters carry meaning, and begin to associate some sounds with letters. All recognise and write their own names. Children know that marks on paper carry meaning and they make attempts at writing, ranging from play writing to the stage where some letter shapes are recognisable as representing words. The quality of teaching in formal aspects of literacy is good. Texts are well chosen to promote interest in literacy and stories, rhymes and songs that children enjoy.

Mathematics

67. Children aged under five years attain average standards for their age in mathematics. They make good progress from the start of the year, when as a group they enter with below average standards. Children count to ten, and use and understand numbers between one and ten. They learn about different shapes, and count the number of sides, corners and faces in two-dimensional forms. Children use number games and apparatus and utilise toys and everyday objects for counting in order to gain a sense of number, quantity, size and shape. Their play with sand and water encourages understanding of capacity and volume. The teaching of mathematics is of good quality and teachers provide children with a good range of experiences which form the basis of later mathematical understanding and exploration.

Knowledge and Understanding of the World

68. In this area of learning and development, children achieve average levels of attainment. They make good progress. They show interest in features of plants, such as the beans and bulbs they have planted and in objects and events in the world around them. Children talk with enthusiasm about these as they tell about their visit to Rochester Castle. They notice some similarities and differences in patterns. Children know the routine for the day and understand that there are different times for daily events. They ask questions about why things happen and how things work and talk about themselves and their families. They are familiar with the school grounds and have been on a local walk during which they discussed the features that they noticed around them. Children learn simple skills of investigation and have made some masks and models using a range of materials, including clay. They are familiar with the use of the keyboard and mouse in simple computer programs. Teaching in this area of learning is good and takes good account of the level of understanding of such young children and their attention span. Concepts and activities are carefully chosen by teachers.

Physical Development

69. Physical development is satisfactory for age, and children make good progress in drawing and play writing. Teachers provide a good range of activities to promote children's dexterity. In larger movements, such as running, jumping, and skipping, children show average attainment. They co-ordinate their movements and stop and start with good control. Children balance well and have a good sense of space. The quality of teaching in this area of learning is good. Teachers plan lessons well to ensure that children practise larger movements in physical education lessons and in outdoor play. There are plenty of wheeled toys and construction apparatus, but there is a lack of appropriate agility apparatus for clambering.

Creative Development

70. In creative aspects of development, children attain average standards for their age and make good progress. They explore sound, colour, texture, shape and form and respond in a variety of ways to what they see, hear, touch and feel. All children enjoy using simple untuned percussion instruments and body percussion, to make rhythmic patterns and explore features of different types of sound. They join in familiar rhymes and songs. They enjoy making their own paintings, creating pictures on the computer and using modelling materials. Children use a widening range of materials, tools and instruments to express ideas and communicate feelings. The quality of teaching is good, and the provision for learning and exploring the arts is satisfactory.

• **ENGLISH, MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE**

• **English**

1. Analysis of the national end of Key Stage 2 tests for 1999 shows that standards in English at Level 4 and above were well below the national average. The proportion of pupils attaining Level 5 was above average. The average of the school's test data is well below average compared with all schools and below average compared with similar schools. Comparison with the results from previous years shows a gradual reduction in standards from close to the average in 1996. An important factor affecting results is the very high number of pupils with special educational needs. It is well above average in this school, and it varies considerably from year group to year group. All classes have above average numbers of pupils with special educational needs.

2. In the previous OFSTED inspection report, standards were found to be in line with national expectations for age in both key stages, although few gained higher levels at the end of Key Stage 2. There was insufficient whole-school planning to ensure continuing progress. The policy was not extended into a scheme of work to support planning and pupils' attainment was not monitored sufficiently.

73. The findings of this inspection are that standards at the end of Key Stage 2, including those for literacy, are close to the level of the national expectation. This indicates better standards than those reflected in the results for the end of key stage tests in 1998 and 1999 but matches the findings of the previous inspection. The current Year 6 has a smaller incidence of pupils with special educational needs, although still above the national average, than the previous or the subsequent year groups. There are no significant variations in results between boys and girls. Pupils with special educational needs attain well for their capabilities and their previous learning.

74. Standards in speaking and listening are average by the end of Key Stage 2. By the end of the key stage, pupils speak confidently and clearly in conversations and learn to address audiences in the classroom and assemblies. There was no evidence during the inspection of formal speaking and listening such as drama, short one-minute prepared speeches, or a mini-debate. Class, group and paired discussions are a normal part of lessons and are well promoted. Plenary sessions in the literacy hour are well used for reporting back to the class from group or paired work. Progress in speaking and listening is sound. Pupils make increasing use of their speaking skills and they widen their range of vocabulary as they progress through the key stage.

75. Overall, pupils attain average standards in reading by the end of Key Stage 2 and make good progress including those with special educational needs. Most pupils read accurately and fluently and tackle a range of texts with understanding. Most summarise events in books they read and make sensible predictions about what might happen next. A few discuss or explain the text they read. Pupils' choices of books range from the easy and humorous to those written by famous children's authors and well-known classics. Pupils use an index and contents proficiently but are less sure when seeking a specific book or information in the library. The school has established the National Literacy Strategy effectively.

76. Overall, pupils attain average standards in writing and make good progress including those with special educational needs. They tackle a wide range of tasks, and write for different purposes and readers. Higher attaining pupils, and those with average ability, use vocabulary to good effect, incorporating adjectives and adverbs to evoke imagery. In Year 6, pupils use the style and vocabulary of Rudyard Kipling to write accounts in the style of his 'Just So' stories. They write very descriptive passages to describe scenes from Shakespeare's 'Romeo and Juliet' and compose evocative poems about autumn. In contrast to this imaginative work, they write strident and terse headlines for a newspaper. On entering Year 6, pupils show a lack of experience in planning their writing even though they do redraft their work. By the end of the year, they make good progress and produce better writing. Presentation and handwriting are satisfactory.

77. Analysis of the 1999 end of Key Stage 1 national test results shows that the percentage of pupils attaining Level 2 or above in reading was below the national average. However, the proportion attaining Level 3 was above the national average. In writing, the percentage attaining Level 2 or above was average but, at Level 3, it was below the national average. When the average of the school's test data is compared with all schools, it shows standards to be below average, but, when compared with similar schools, they are average. It should be noted that the 1999 Year 2 cohort contained over 50 per cent of pupils with special educational needs which is likely to affect average standards negatively.

78. The school's test data show that over the period 1996-1999, standards in reading and writing declined overall. Until 1999, standards in both these subjects had been above the national average. Boys and girls perform similarly and any differences reflect national trends.

79. The findings of this inspection are that the percentage of the pupils in the present Year 2, who are attaining standards in line with national expectations, is below average. However, there is a very high proportion of pupils with special educational needs in Year 2 which is likely to affect average standards negatively. Standards in literacy, overall, are below average at the end of the key stage. There are no significant variations due to gender. All ability groups attain satisfactorily for their capabilities and previous learning in speaking and listening and in reading. Progress in speaking and listening and reading is satisfactory, but in writing, it is unsatisfactory.

80. Standards in speaking and listening are satisfactory at the end of Key Stage 1. Pupils narrate, describe, and converse at levels appropriate to their age. They speak confidently, contribute to class discussions and show and tell sessions, and listen very attentively. Progress in speaking and listening is sound. Pupils speak at greater length, and with an increasing range of vocabulary, and listen with more attention to detail as they get older.

81. Overall, by the end of Key Stage 1, pupils attain below average standards in reading. Higher attaining pupils read accurately and use reading to find simple information or enjoy a suitable story, but most of them learn by familiarity with a basic vocabulary. Most pupils enjoy books, and take their reading books home regularly to practise their skills. Decoding skills develop slowly through the key stage, although for the more able and average ability groups, by Year 2, they are satisfactory. A variety of activities are provided to emphasise reading for meaning, and this is having an impact. Books are well promoted in the literacy hour.

82. In writing, by the end of Key Stage 1, pupils have below average attainment. The pace of development of spelling and handwriting through the key stage is too slow. Although the higher attaining pupils and those of average ability write a few sentences carefully and independently and spell appropriately for their age, most pupils require continual support. Progress in writing is slow and is unsatisfactory.

83. Overall progress in English through Key Stage 1 is satisfactory, although progress in writing is weaker than in speaking and listening and reading. Progress in spelling and handwriting is particularly slow in Year 2. There is sound development in reading with texts well matched to pupils' ability, thus allowing success at their own levels. Speaking and listening are promoted in 'show and tell' sessions, and in the plenary sections of the literacy hours. Progress through Key Stage 2 is satisfactory overall. Although standards at the end of Key Stage 1 are below average in English, they are average by the end of Key Stage 2 thus showing satisfactory progress. Pupils of all abilities make at least satisfactory progress, including the higher attaining who are well challenged in all aspects of English. This is an improvement from the situation reported at the last OFSTED inspection. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress.

84. Pupils' attitudes to their work in English are satisfactory in Key Stage 1 and good in Key Stage 2. In Key Stage 1, pupils are interested in their work, and settle down well, but some are easily distracted without support from adults. Behaviour is satisfactory in Key Stage 1. In Key Stage 2, pupils are more interested in their work, settle down well and by the end of the key stage, they concentrate well on tasks and persevere with their work independently. All pupils enjoy opportunities for collaborative work, for example, discussing with partners or in small groups. They listen well for their age, throughout the school, and are eager to comment and ask questions. Thoughtfulness and reflection are encouraged by teachers' use of open-ended questions.

85. Overall, the quality of teaching is good in both key stages, with very good approaches in Year 6. All lessons observed were satisfactory or better, with nearly two-thirds being good or very good. Planning is careful, thorough and clear at all levels and provides good support. Teachers take account of their assessments of pupils' attainment in planning work, particularly for pupils with special educational needs. They encourage careful listening skills and pupils' comments and questions are welcomed. All teachers use open-ended questions skilfully to evaluate learning and to promote thinking and reasoning. They incorporate imaginative ideas into lessons, such as the use of interesting board games, to teach pupils how to write instructions. An example of this imaginative approach involved pupils writing about the Romeo and Juliet story as if it were contemporary and as if they were television reporters. Although pupils speak and listen in the plenary sessions of the literacy hour, they have few formal opportunities to practise their oral skills or debating skills. Reading is carefully taught, but teachers lack some awareness of important skills in reading. In addition, they keep few records of pupils' progress in reading. Some advanced reading skills are taught, but it is a limited range. There is little formal teaching of library skills and teachers do not regularly encourage pupils to undertake independent research. Literary appreciation is well taught, and books well promoted. The establishment of the National Literacy Strategy has proved effective. It contributes well to

the pupils' literary understanding and to their skills in grammar and punctuation. Grammar is particularly carefully taught and pupils are encouraged to extend their range of vocabulary well. Teachers present pupils with many purposes for writing and this is well taught to pupils. This begins in Key Stage 1 and is widely extended by the top of the school until the range includes writing letters, reports, scripts, descriptions, stories, instructions and reviews. Pupils are encouraged to adapt their style and vocabulary to the purpose and reader. They are taught to draft and redraft, although their initial planning lacks adequate attention. Good attention is given to handwriting and presentation skills. Extra after school booster classes are provided. They are open to pupils of all abilities who wish to join them and, last year, those pupils who were close to achieving Level 4 in the end of key stage tests succeeded in attaining at that level as a result.

86. The quality of the curriculum is good. There is an appropriate policy for the subject, and the National Literacy Strategy framework has been adopted as the school's scheme for reading and writing. There are no specific guidelines for extended writing, individual reading, drama and speaking and listening to indicate the school's approaches for ensuring progress in these areas. The school has developed its own handwriting and spelling schemes, which state how pupils should progress in their skills, and these are a useful addition to the National Literacy Strategy framework. There has been an improvement in whole-school planning and in the scheme of work since the last OFSTED inspection. The school has chosen to timetable periods for extended writing and these are well planned. However, medium and long-term plans do not include specific goals in speaking and listening.

87. Assessment and recording in the subject are satisfactory, overall. A weakness is that there is no formal, whole-school or consistent approach to assessment in speaking and listening. The use of reading tests is good and these are administered twice a year from Year 2 upwards. The school uses English national tests from Year 3 to Year 5 in addition to the national end of key stage tests in Years 2 and 6. However, there is a lack of appropriate continuous reading records. This reflects the issue raised in the last OFSTED report concerning the monitoring of reading. Writing is generally well assessed. Teachers regularly work together to agree upon the levels represented by pupils' written work. Pupils' work in phonics and spelling is assessed periodically and this is satisfactory. There is a good marking guide for teachers. Marking is positive but is not always used to focus pupils on the improvements they need to make in their work. Reports to parents are comprehensive and informative. Assessments of pupils from year to year are used to help set school targets in the subject which are appropriate and realistic. In 1998 and 1999, results were close to the school's targets for the national end of Key Stage 2 tests.

88. The quality of the management of the subject is good. The co-ordinator has good subject knowledge. She has enthusiasm for literature which she shares with her colleagues and which they pass on to their pupils. Her co-ordination role includes scrutiny of plans, sampling and moderating pupils' work, auditing and managing resources, and monitoring lessons. Lessons have been systematically monitored throughout the school.

89. Overall the quality of resources is satisfactory. They are adequate for the National Literacy Strategy, with some good Big Books and group readers. Class libraries are adequate as is the main library stock. The library stock is not appropriately classified and contains many old books. The library is under-used. Although the space is not large enough for class or large group teaching, it serves as a resource to support some independent research for older pupils, and for teaching library skills to small groups.

90. The pupils' literary experiences are enriched through book fairs, book weeks, visits by an author and a poet, theatre performers, visits to the theatre, as well as school drama productions. Year 6 pupils have recently seen a performance of excerpts from Shakespeare's 'Romeo and Juliet'.

91. The implementation of the National Literacy Strategy is well established and is proving effective. Overall, the school's provision for literacy is satisfactory. Literacy is taught daily in all classes, and time is used very well. Literacy is appropriately developed throughout the curriculum, for example, in writing reports in science, descriptions in history and geography and reading for information in a variety of subjects and topics. The subject meets the requirements of the National Curriculum.

72. Mathematics

92. Analysis of the school's end of Key Stage 2 national test results for 1999 shows that the percentage of pupils attaining at Level 4, or above, was well below the national average. The proportion of pupils attaining at higher levels was just below the national average. When the average of the school's test data is compared with all schools, it shows standards well below the average and below average standards in comparison with similar schools. This indicates a fall in standards since the last OFSTED inspection. Of the 1999 Year 6 cohort of pupils, half had significant special educational needs, which had a negative impact upon average attainment.

93. When the school's results in mathematics are analysed over time, they show a fluctuation since 1996. In that year, standards were in line with the national average. They rose the following year and fell to well below average in 1998 and 1999. This trend corresponds to the increasing number of pupils entering the school with special educational needs from around the average in 1997 to very high, compared nationally, in 1998 and 1999. Boys and girls attain similarly and any differences correlate to the larger number of boys with special educational needs.

94. The findings of the inspection are that the proportion of pupils in the present Year 6, who attaining standards in line with the national expectation, is average. Pupils use the four operations, when working mentally, to follow a sequence of instructions. They apply their previous knowledge to solve problems and use appropriate mathematical language when describing multiples, factors and square numbers. They change fractions into decimals and identify percentages from fractions and decimals. In their work on shape and measure, they use 360 degree protractors to measure acute, obtuse and reflex angles accurately. The more able mathematicians apply their knowledge to work out how to calculate angles on a straight line or in a circle. Pupils draw frequency graphs to illustrate data they collect about the heights of their classmates and investigate the probability of the number of times a six will appear as a result of 50 throws of a dice.

95. Analysis of the 1999 end of Key Stage 1 national test results shows that the proportion of pupils attaining at the national expectation of Level 2 is average. The percentage of pupils achieving higher levels is also in line with schools nationally. When the average of the school's test data is compared with all schools, it shows average standards, but when compared with similar schools, standards are above average.

96. When the school's results are analysed over the period from 1996 to 1999, they show standards consistently above the national average apart from in 1999. This cohort, however, had nearly 60 per cent of pupils with special educational needs. This has had a negative impact upon average standards. Girls have performed slightly better than boys during this period but not significantly so.

97. The findings of this inspection are that the proportion of pupils in the present Year 2 who are attaining at the national expectation for age is below average. However, this is a class in which there are 66 per cent of pupils with special educational needs. Boys represent two-thirds of these pupils and, as a result, boys' average attainment is lower than girls. Pupils add and subtract two numbers accurately to make numbers to and from ten and the higher attaining do this to 20 and beyond. They use alternative phrases such as 'minus', 'take away' and 'count back' to describe subtraction. In mental mathematics work, some calculate the change due from 10 or 20 pence when purchasing individually priced items. Many are still insecure in this and respond with guesses without any thought. Pupils with average ability correctly identify odd and even numbers and accurately shade out multiples on a hundred square. Higher attaining pupils combine three digits to make totals to 20, subtract three numbers from ten to arrive at zero and recognise some numbers over 1000. Most pupils recognise a metre rule and use rulers of differing lengths to measure straight lines. However, a significant minority of pupils fail to begin their measurement at the correct point on the ruler or the line. Higher attaining pupils work out how to measure a line which is longer than the ruler. Some pupils identify common two-dimensional shapes such as triangles, squares, rectangles, pentagons and hexagons.

98. Pupils at Key Stage 1 make satisfactory progress overall. Within this judgement pupils with special educational needs make good progress as a result of class teachers planning carefully for their needs and ensuring that they receive very good support from teaching assistants. This enables these pupils to take a full part in mental mathematics sessions and to make a good improvement for their ability. In some lessons, higher attaining pupils do not always make the progress they should, either because they are insufficiently challenged by the tasks set for them, or as a result of marking time, while teachers explain concepts to the remainder of the class which the higher attaining pupils have already grasped. Pupils make gains in their

number work from recognising and writing numbers to ten correctly in Year 1 to adding and subtracting more than two digits in Year 2. They become more familiar with mathematical language and use an increasing range of words and phrases to describe operations such as subtraction. In mental mathematics sessions, pupils become quicker at calculating and in explaining their reasoning. The implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy has already brought about improvements in this area of pupils' attainment.

99. At Key Stage 2, pupils make satisfactory progress overall. As at Key Stage 1, and for the same reasons, pupils with special educational needs make good progress. This is a strength of the school, particularly when there is such a very high proportion of these pupils. Conversely, and as in Key Stage 1, in some classes, higher attaining pupils do not always progress as well as they should. As they move through the key stage, pupils develop a wider range of strategies for mental calculation and combine more operations to work out problems. They improve their ability to recognise proportions and ratios, and to estimate and measure. They consolidate their understanding of place value until, by Year 6, many more pupils work comfortably in thousands when adding and subtracting and in hundreds when multiplying and dividing. Pupils become more aware of the properties of shapes, from identifying the number of sides of two-dimensional shapes in Year 3 to drawing nets of triangular prisms in Year 6. They also develop greater ability to collect, organise and illustrate data.

100. Pupils have good attitudes to their lessons. They enjoy the mental mathematics session, which begins all numeracy lessons, compete keenly with each other and are eager to show teachers their knowledge. Pupils work well during group tasks, sharing ideas and resources willingly and persevering through difficulty. They take pride in telling their classmates about new things they have learned in lessons and in mastering new concepts. Behaviour in lessons is good and pupils listen with sustained concentration to teachers' explanations and questions.

101. The quality of teaching is always at least satisfactory at both key stages. Of the seven lessons observed during the inspection, two were good and five satisfactory. A particular strength of the teaching is the way in which teachers manage pupils' behaviour. In each class, there are pupils who have special educational needs, as a result of experiencing difficulties in behaving appropriately. As a result of the firm, but generally sensitive, manner in which class teachers and teaching assistants control these pupils, they behave sensibly and play a full part in lessons. Together with other pupils who have general or specific learning difficulties, these pupils often make good progress in lessons. Other strengths in teaching include clear planning, which ensures that pupils build daily and weekly on their mathematical skills and which provides a good mixture of activities. Within lessons, teachers relate well to pupils. This encourages pupils to contribute ideas and to volunteer answers, even if they are not sure whether they are correct. Where teachers' subject knowledge is good, they explain concepts and strategies in a number of different ways to help all pupils gain understanding. This is particularly noticeable in mental mathematics sessions when teachers explain how to take 'shortcuts' to help pupils to speed up calculations and to encourage them to explain to other pupils how they work out problems mentally. Overall, teachers implement the National Numeracy Strategy successfully and this has a positive impact upon pupils' attainment in mental mathematics. Resources are used well, such as an overhead projector, to explain new concepts clearly. This was evident in lessons about measuring angles in Year 6 and identifying prime numbers in Year 5. Where teachers are less confident in implementing the National Numeracy Strategy and/or lack good subject knowledge, there are some weaknesses in teaching. In some lessons, teachers spend too long trying to ensure that all pupils in the class understand every concept fully. As a result, the more able pupils, who quickly understand the concept, mark time waiting to start tasks designed to reinforce or extend their knowledge. This means they do not always make sufficient progress during lessons.

102. The school teaches numeracy on a daily basis to all classes and the mathematics curriculum is based on the framework of the National Numeracy Strategy. This ensures that the subject has breadth and balance across the attainment targets of the National Curriculum and meets statutory requirements. All pupils have equal access to the curriculum. Pupils with special educational needs are well provided for and receive good support from teaching assistants, who ensure that any targets in pupils' individual education plans, which refer to numeracy, are well integrated into daily lessons. Procedures used to assess pupils' attainment are good and ensure that teachers in different year groups are fully aware of the strengths and weaknesses of individual pupils when they enter their class at the beginning of the academic year. Pupils' attainment is assessed termly against the key objectives in the National Numeracy Strategy. National and other external standardised test results are analysed in order to identify pupils' strengths and weaknesses.

This analysis is used to inform teachers' plans and to identify the need to provide specific resources to support any weaknesses highlighted. Also, this helps the Year 6 teacher to prepare pupils better for the end of key stage national tests. The information has been used to aid the school to set realistic targets for improvement in national test results.

103. The subject is well managed. The recently appointed co-ordinator is a graduate mathematician and has worked extremely hard to provide a clear direction for the subject and to prepare the school for the introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy. She has attended courses and provides training and support for classroom teachers and teaching assistants. The co-ordinator has written a new useful policy for the subject which fully reflects the changes in teaching methods and approaches, necessitated by the new strategy. She has monitored some teaching this term but her role in monitoring teaching and the quality of pupils' work is insufficiently developed. It is planned that more time will be made available for this in the remaining two terms of this academic year. Resources available to support teaching and learning are satisfactory. Many recent purchases to support the new approaches have enhanced learning and resources are now allocated to each classroom rather than held centrally. This means that a wider range of resources is now available to teachers and that they are more accessible. New resources such as overhead projectors and digit cards contribute well to the gains in pupils' understanding and progress, particularly in mental strategies. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' social development when they work in pairs or groups. It contributes well to other subjects such as science, information technology and design and technology, when there is a need to measure, calculate or organise data.

72.

Science

104. Analysis of the Key Stage 2 national tests for 1999 shows that the percentage of pupils attaining Level 4 or above was in line with national expectations. The number of pupils reaching Level 5 was in line with national expectations. At Key Stage 1, pupils achieved above the national averages in the 1999 teacher assessments. Overall, the performance in the science tests at Key Stage 2 was close to the national average, when compared with all schools, over the past three years. In the previous year, 1998, the percentage of pupils achieving Level 4 or above was above national expectations, whilst the number of pupils reaching Level 5 was below the national expectation for age.

105. The findings of the inspection indicate that most pupils attain standards at the level of the national expectation for age by the end of Key Stage 2. This is in line with the findings of the last OFSTED inspection and the findings of the analysis of the national test for 1999. By the end of Key Stage 2, most pupils have some understanding of the idea of a fair test and record their findings from experiments on to line graphs. Pupils in Year 3 identify objects that use springs. Pupils in Year 4 undertake an experiment to separate a mixture of solids by sieving. Year 5 pupils understand what external variations affect the process of a solid changing into a liquid. By Year 6, pupils know that mixing materials can cause changes. There are opportunities for pupils to use simple apparatus, make predictions and observations and record their findings. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils identify and sort a range of materials. Pupils in Year 1 sort materials into 'cold', 'soft' and 'smooth' sets. They know what food is needed to keep them healthy and describe the life cycle of frogs and butterflies. They identify a range of materials that are magnetic and non-magnetic. Pupils in Year 2 build a simple electrical circuit and draw a circuit diagram

106. Most pupils make satisfactory progress, whilst pupils with special educational needs make good progress. Scrutiny of pupils' work shows that they use an increasing scientific vocabulary and build on their knowledge. For example, younger pupils record simple experiments on the properties of materials, whilst older pupils are able to select materials and identify their suitability for insulation.

107. Pupils respond well to science and enjoy their work. They show a keen interest and concentrate well, particularly in practical work. They work co-operatively sharing apparatus and discussing findings. Pupils generally behave well and show due regard for working safely, such as being careful with delicate bulbs in the bulb holders. They take responsibility for their own work and confidently carry out experiments.

108. The quality of teaching is satisfactory at both key stages. In the best lessons, teachers have high expectations, pace lessons well and motivate pupils through demonstrating a keen interest in the subject and forming warm relationships with them. However, teachers provide insufficient opportunities to extend pupils' thinking by providing choices about methods they could use to carry out investigations. Where

teaching is weaker, the pace of the lesson is too slow and too much time is spent recording information. There is an over reliance on the use of worksheets. As a result, teachers miss opportunities to extend pupils' knowledge and raise attainment.

109. Planning is satisfactory, but often lacks a specific focus to challenge the higher attaining pupils. Work planned for pupils with special educational needs reflects targets contained within their individual education plans. These pupils are well supported by assistants and, as a result, make good progress. Teachers' understanding and knowledge are sound. Methods used are appropriate for the curriculum and achieve the learning objectives. Resources are used satisfactorily and provide a 'hands on' experience for pupils in many lessons. Teachers control pupils well and they remind them about the safe handling of materials. Assessment of pupils' work is satisfactory and teachers use the documents provided by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority as a framework. This ensures that the requirements of the National Curriculum are fully met. Assessment is used to inform future planning, but is insufficiently used to provide challenge for the higher attaining pupils.

110. The findings of the previous OFSTED inspection were that the co-ordination of the subject was weak, and this is still the case. The co-ordinator has worked hard to ensure that planning is in place and there is evidence of her enthusiasm for the subject. Assessment is now included for the subject but does not yet sufficiently inform the planning of all teachers or for the subject as a whole. The co-ordinator lacks identified time to monitor the subject in classrooms and this inhibits planning to raise standards of progress and attainment across both key stages. There is no allocated budget for the subject, which prevents the ability to match resources with developments in the subject. Information technology is used to record the collection of scientific data. The subject contributes to numeracy through the analysis of data and the preparation of charts and graphs, to record findings. Pupils use literacy skills to predict and record their findings. Resources for science are good.

72. OTHER SUBJECTS OR COURSES

72. Information technology

111. The majority of pupils meet the national expectations for age at the end of Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. This is an improvement on the findings of the previous OFSTED inspection where it was found that standards by the end of Key Stage 2 were generally below average. The improvement is the result of using the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority document for information technology as a basis for planning. There is still a weakness in the teaching of some aspects of control, monitoring and modelling across both key stages. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils program a robot with simple instruction to go backwards and forwards. They understand that information can be presented in different forms and use information technology to generate a piece of writing, which they save and restore with some help. Pupils in Year 2 load and use a CD-ROM spelling program. In Year 4, pupils prepare a set of instructions for a board game, using the computer. They are confident in selecting from a range of font styles, colours, and borders to present their work. Pupils store and retrieve their work and contribute to a database on the facilities provided in a local village. Pupils in Year 4 enter instructions in sequence to draw a shape. By Year 6, pupils design a table and insert information and also select a picture and place a frame around it. Pupils click and drag icons across the screen. They use a publishing program to create and change banners and print work in the style of a newspaper.

112. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress through both key stages. They gain confidence and accuracy when using the mouse and keyboard to access menus. Many pupils cope well with increasingly complex tasks involving word-processing, data-handling, control of movement and logic games.

113. The response of the pupils to information technology is good. Most pupils are enthusiastic and confident. Those who have computers at home often take the lead in group work as they are the most confident. Pupils respond well to lessons and work satisfactorily when they use a computer. They listen to teachers' instructions and try to follow them and handle equipment with care. Older pupils work independently and support each other with their tasks.

114. The quality of teaching is satisfactory at both key stages. The class lessons in the 'quiet room' work well, despite the age of some of the computers. All pupils quickly hear about their set task and the computers are prepared for them to use. Teachers use the published national schemes of work to ensure that

they cover the National Curriculum adequately. Lesson objectives are clear and teachers use them to check pupils' progress during sessions. Most lessons are aimed at average levels of attainment expected of each age group and, due to this, they often fail to extend higher attaining pupils. Equality of opportunity for all pupils to develop their computer skills is satisfactory. Teachers find it difficult to provide support for pupils using computers during other lessons and, as a consequence, classroom work is mostly based on tasks that pupils can undertake independently.

115. The co-ordinator has attended training courses and has led training within the school on an informal basis. Staff training needs exist to ensure that they are competent in teaching all the requirements of the National Curriculum for this subject. There has been no monitoring of information technology. There is no overall assessment of standards throughout the school and, as a result, the co-ordinator is unclear about what standards are achieved in any class other than his own. Management of the subject is a weakness, due to insufficient monitoring to ensure that pupils make enough progress. There is not a policy for this subject. Spending needs have been identified with the governing body and a new computer has been bought for each class. This now means that the accommodation and learning resources to support the subject are satisfactory. There are plans to refurbish a room in the school to make a more appropriate computer suite. Information technology is used to support the teaching of literacy and numeracy.

72.

Religious education

116. In the previous OFSTED inspection, pupils' levels of attainment were reported as being unsatisfactory overall. Teaching contained insufficient questioning and reflection on religious issues and concepts to develop pupils' understanding. The continued progress of pupils' understanding was insufficient, and reflected a less than full implementation of the locally Agreed Syllabus. In addition, resources were insufficient. The findings of this inspection indicate that attainment is satisfactory and there is evidence of teachers using questioning well to promote pupils' thinking and reflection. Satisfactory curricular mapping provides sound support for the continued progress of pupils and reflects the locally Agreed Syllabus appropriately. Resources have improved, particularly artefacts.

117. In this inspection, due to timetabling factors, it was only possible to see two lessons, one at the end of Key Stage 1 and one at the end of Key Stage 2. However, from discussions with staff and pupils, a scrutiny of teachers' planning and pupils' work, it is possible to say that, by the end of both key stages, there are average levels of attainment in religious education. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils know about special rules, special places and special books in the faith tradition of Christianity and similar information about Judaism and Sikhism. They are familiar with the idea of anniversaries and celebrations and understand the place of worship within a community. In connection with a recent visit to an Anglican church, pupils recalled their experiences and analysed in some depth the ways in which a church could support its local community. They reflected upon the historical tradition of the church's past, and related it to the present. They are familiar with vocabulary describing artefacts and the interior of a church. In Key Stage 1, pupils learn stories about the life of Jesus, understand about festivals and celebrations, such as harvest thanksgivings and Christmas, and begin to learn about celebrations in other faith traditions, such as Diwali.

118. Progress, in both key stages, is satisfactory overall. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress. Pupils add to their understanding and knowledge of Christianity, Sikhism and Judaism, as they pass through the school. They acquire an understanding of the stories that underlie various celebrations and, by the time they leave the school, they can compare and contrast different traditions and see that many different faiths have common elements, such as naming traditions and the giving of gifts.

119. Pupils take a serious interest in religious education. Their attitudes are satisfactory in both key stages. They enjoy visits and stories and enjoy working together collaboratively.

120. The quality of teaching is satisfactory at both key stages. Content is relevant to the locally Agreed Syllabus and is satisfactorily planned. In both lessons seen, follow-up activities were imaginatively chosen to consolidate and reinforce actively the ideas and understanding gained. Questions were used skilfully to assess what the pupils had remembered, to promote thinking and reasoning, and to deepen reflection.

121. The curriculum has been substantially improved since the last inspection. The policy is clear and is satisfactory. The scheme is brief but succinct and reflects well the locally Agreed Syllabus. Teachers write

their own notes on pupils' progress, using the level descriptors in the locally Agreed Syllabus to guide them about pupils' attainment.

122. There is no co-ordinator at present. The headteacher is temporarily holding this brief. He has sampled some lessons and pupils' work and has taught lessons in some year groups. He has looked at some planning, but there is no whole-school plan for the subject, to ensure good development. Pupils make visits to local churches, mostly Anglican, and local clergy visit in school. There are, however, no visits to places of worship connected to the other faiths, Judaism and Sikhism. Resources are generally satisfactory in the subject. There are artefact collections for all the faiths studied. Books about Christianity and a number of other faiths are to be found in the library. However, the school's collections of pictures and posters are insufficiently comprehensive. The subject meets the requirements of the locally Agreed Syllabus.

72. Art

123. At both key stages, pupils attain above average standards for their age in art. This was the finding of the previous OFSTED inspection. At Key Stage 1, pupils mix the colours red, green and yellow to produce autumn hues in their paintings. They weave paper to make attractive patterns. Pupils in Year 1 use the patterns of tiles they saw while visiting Rochester Cathedral to make patterns with potato prints and symmetrical patterns in the shape of butterflies. Pupils in Year 2 make firework collage pictures to enhance their history lessons about the story of Guy Fawkes. They model clay 'sunshine' trees. At Key Stage 2, pupils plan and make mechanisms for pop-up books including flaps, turning wheels and moving arms. They recognise and copy designs for Greek pots. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils contribute to a large class collage of 'The Elephant's Child' to accompany the story by Rudyard Kipling. They identify a range of artistic styles and paint in the style of Monet, Van Gogh and Renoir. In line with the findings of the previous inspection, there is good art work on display. The previous inspection also identified the study of a wide range of artists as a strength in Key Stage 2 and this is still the case.

124. Progress, including that for pupils with special educational needs, is good. Pupils learn an increasingly broad range of techniques and use different media with enjoyment. They also make gains in their knowledge of the styles and motivations of famous artists and become increasingly aware of art and craft from other cultures.

125. Pupils enjoy their art work, show good attitudes and take pride in their work. This was the finding of the previous OFSTED inspection. They are confident in their use of materials. Pupils are positive about each other's work, take care of equipment and use tools carefully, for example, craft knives.

126. The quality of teaching, in the two lessons observed, was satisfactory. Teachers' subject knowledge and planning are good. They set good standards and expect pupils to work accurately and observe closely. Teachers give pupils too few opportunities to select appropriate art materials for themselves. Pupils at Key Stage 2 have sketchbooks and these provide an opportunity for pupils to build upon their skills, develop designs that they refer to and record their progress. However, there is little opportunity for pupils to evaluate their own work. This was also the finding of the previous OFSTED inspection. Pupils in Year 4 are given opportunities to model and assess a first draft for a pop-up card. Teachers are clear about their expectations of good behaviour during art lessons and the need for pupils to concentrate on the task in hand. Lessons have an effective focus and a shared sense of purpose. The provision of art materials is good.

127. There is a policy for the subject and a scheme of work identifies the work to be covered. The co-ordinator plays a major part in the development of art within the school. She provides strong leadership and supports colleagues with ideas. Together with other teachers, she organises an extra-curricular art and craft club for pupils, which enhances learning still further. An appropriate allocation of time enables her to provide effective support.

128. Classrooms have art areas with water and facilities for storing art materials. In Key Stage 1, these areas have become crowded with equipment and, as a result, it is difficult for pupils to take responsibility for collecting and washing their own resources. The co-ordinator ensures that high quality artwork enhances the ambience of the school and this encourages pupils to provide their best quality work.

129. Art contributes to the social skills of pupils and, through their study of important artists, to their cultural awareness. Art also contributes to other subject areas. As a result of a visit to Rochester Cathedral, pupils are able to identify and copy symmetrical patterns. Information technology computer programs are

used to help pupils to develop their awareness of design.

72.

Design and technology

130. By the time the pupils leave the school, they attain average standards for their age. This is an improvement on the findings of the last OFSTED inspection when standards were judged to be below average. Pupils consider the specification for products, draft several designs and predict difficulties in production. Year 6 pupils, when considering how to make slippers, took an old pair apart to inform them how they were made. Given a constraint upon materials and tools at their disposal, pupils produced a prototype to test. On investigation, they decided to make a template of the sole and listed the construction method and materials they would use to ensure comfort. During the making of the slippers, pupils recorded the difficulties they encountered and the methods for attaching the various component parts. The finished product was tested and evaluated for comfort and durability and pupils identified any thing they would do differently next time. Pupils use sewing and gluing as methods for construction, and used the tools available to them proficiently and safely.

131. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress. In Year 1, pupils make a fruit salad having discussed the class's likes and dislikes, and considered the balance of fruits and the effect of the different colours. By the time pupils reach Year 4, they design their favourite meals, evaluate their nutritional content, and list the amount of fat, protein, carbohydrate and additives present. In Year 5, pupils examine musical instruments to find out which parts produce which effect and then design and make their own hole shaker and harp.

132. Pupils respond well to their lessons. They particularly like to make products and to test the effectiveness, especially in Year 1, when they make fruit salad! They work well together and handle tools and other equipment safely and with respect. Pupils take a pride in a successful product and are keen to identify improvements to their designs.

133. Timetable arrangements meant that only one lesson was observed during the time of the inspection. However, from talking with pupils and teachers, examining teachers' plans and pupils' work, it is possible to judge that the quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. Teachers plan lessons carefully to ensure a balance between instruction and activity. They insist that pupils think carefully about the design stage before allowing them to make products. Teachers help pupils to use resources safely and to choose the 'right tool for the job' by direct teaching and skilful questioning. They encourage pupils to evaluate their work carefully and to identify what has worked and how well the products meet the design specification.

1.The curriculum and teachers' assessments of pupils' work are satisfactory. The school provides pupils with a balanced range of experiences and ensures that the aspects recommended nationally are fully taught. There is a comprehensive policy, which identifies the aims, purposes, content and planning cycle for the subject. This is helpful especially for teachers who are new to the school or less confident in their own subject knowledge. The school has recently adopted a national scheme of work, which again provides a secure base for teaching.

2.At present, there is no co-ordinator for the subject. This is a weakness in the management of the subject. It means that there is no coherent system for ensuring that all teachers follow the planned curriculum or for identifying any support or advice that teachers may require. The subject makes a good contribution to applying scientific knowledge and understanding when pupils research the nutritional composition of meals and when they measure and weigh when making products.

135.

Geography

3.Due to timetabling factors, only two lessons were observed. Evidence from teachers' plans, pupils' work, and from the two lessons seen, indicate average standards of attainment for pupils' ages in both key stages. In the Key Stage 2 lesson, pupils talked about their work, and their understanding of geographical data. However, the sample of work scrutinised showed an overemphasis on copied text, rather than pupils writing their own descriptions. This partially reflects the comments of the previous inspection.

136. The findings of the previous OFSTED inspection were that the subject did not meet the requirements of the National Curriculum. Attainment was in line with national expectations for age at the end of Key

Stage 1, but only to superficial levels of understanding and was below expectations at the end of Key Stage 2. Teachers were unclear about what pupils should understand or do, the approach to the subject was insufficiently systematic, and the co-ordination of the subject was weak. Since the last OFSTED inspection, the official requirements for this subject have changed. In this current inspection, however, it is clear that some improvement in the subject has taken place, although there are still issues to be addressed.

137. Pupils in Key Stage 2 find geographical features and places on maps and understand how man is affected by, and has affected, the environment. They relate their local surroundings to maps, in order to chart a walk or a journey, and note the facilities and businesses in the community and how these serve the public. Locations abroad in different climates are studied and older pupils' work shows evidence of using co-ordinates for map work. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils know that there are other countries across the sea and that some are hotter, others cooler. They are familiar with maps and globes. They understand that climate makes a difference to crops, housing and clothing. In the Year 2 lesson, pupils studied a map of Israel as an introduction to the Christmas themes and they identified Jesus' birthplace, Bethlehem. Indications from the work sample show that progress for all pupils is satisfactory in both key stages.

139. Pupils' attitudes are satisfactory. They talk about what they have learned and show interest in the places they have visited. Work is generally neat and carefully produced. They enjoy collaborative working in lessons.

140. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. Teachers plan work well. The best features of lessons included collaborative working, active methods of discussion using skilful questioning techniques, pupils' written descriptions and integration with other subjects. Examples of the latter were seen in Year 4, when geographical work was combined with information technology. Pupils made their own database on the computers, using data collected previously on a visit to the local village centre. In the Year 2 lesson, geographical work was combined with some elements of religious education. Evidence from the work sample showed over reliance on copied texts and worksheets, with little emphasis on promotion of pupils' own thinking and reasoning and little indication of greater levels of challenge for the more able pupils. Thus, although there is some improvement in the quality of pupils' learning at Key Stage 2, since the last OFSTED inspection, there are still areas where pupils are insufficiently challenged particularly in the depth of their knowledge and understanding.

141. The curriculum for the subject has improved since the last OFSTED inspection. There is a good policy, and a national scheme of work has been adopted by the school. From this, an appropriate curricular map has been derived, showing the units selected from the scheme which form the basis of work for the different year groups. Planning is satisfactory at all levels. Field work is undertaken by all year groups, and visits are arranged to appropriate and relevant locations, including the River Medway, a local village, Westgate, local marshes, and to Rochester. Assessment is satisfactory. Teachers record attainment at the end of lessons according to whether it is above or below average and report pupils' attainment to parents annually.

142. The co-ordination of the subject remains a weakness. This was highlighted in the previous OFSTED report. There is insufficient monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning in this subject. Resources are adequate. The school has basic weather monitoring equipment, maps, globes, atlases, and a selection of suitable books in the library.

134.

History

143. Pupils attain average standards for their age by the time they leave the school. This was the finding of the previous OFSTED inspection. Pupils in Key Stage 1 identify and sequence events in the life of Guy Fawkes, and recognise time-lines reflecting the major events of their lives. In Key Stage 2, pupils use pictures and artefacts to interpret information about the beliefs of Ancient Egyptians. Pupils in Year 5 take the legend of 'Theseus and the Minotaur' and discuss some of the differences in the way that the past is interpreted. Pupils in Year 6 write with empathy about what it would feel like to work in a coal mine in Victorian times. Pupils develop an understanding of chronology and learn to differentiate between fact and fiction. There is a heavy reliance on worksheets to support learning and this inhibits the attainment of the higher attaining pupils. Pupils have insufficient opportunities to investigate, select and record relevant information for themselves. Older pupils do not undertake enough sustained research and are not fully aware of the criteria for judging the reliability of historical evidence.

144. All pupils make satisfactory progress, including those with special educational needs. Pupils

develop a clear understanding of relevant stages of history and learn to interpret and evaluate historical facts in a variety of ways. Younger pupils put photographs of themselves onto a time line. Pupils in Year 4 select three questions they would like to ask about religion in Ancient Egypt and use the reference library to find their answers. Older pupils learn to interpret the story that has been painted on a Greek vase.

145. Pupils' attitudes to history are satisfactory. They respond well to questions, settle well to the tasks given to them and are confident when using reference sheets for information. Pupils work well together and are mostly well behaved. They are interested in history and enjoy talking about events and people from the past.

146. The quality of teaching is satisfactory at both key stages. Teachers' subject knowledge is sound and they provide clear learning objectives for lessons. Teachers do not set writing tasks that sufficiently extend the higher attaining pupils. Resources are generally satisfactory but there are insufficient artefacts to enhance pupils' understanding of the past. They also have insufficient opportunities to use reference books for independent research. Assessment of pupils' work informs curricular development but not their achievement and the needs of higher attaining pupils are insufficiently targeted.

147. There is no co-ordinator for the subject. As a result, no monitoring of teaching, or of standards in the subject, has taken place. There is no specific budget allocated to the teaching and learning of history. This is a weakness in the management of the subject and there is no means of ensuring that sufficient progress is made by pupils.

Music

148. The findings of this inspection show average standards for pupils' ages by the end of Key Stage 2. In some areas of the music curriculum, they are good. Whilst there is improvement in the planned opportunities for listening to music from different times and places, the co-ordination of the subject still remains unsatisfactory. The co-ordinator has very good musical knowledge, but is able to devote little time to co-ordinating the subject because of other duties. In the previous OFSTED inspection, pupils attained sound standards in both key stages. The curriculum was judged to include too few planned opportunities for listening and responding to music from different times and places. The co-ordination of the subject, due to other commitments, was insufficiently organised to provide adequate leadership and support.

149. During the inspection, only two lessons in music were observed, one at the end of Key Stage 1 and one at the end of Key Stage 2. Additionally, a whole-school hymn practice was observed. There was little or no evidence in written form about pupils' attainment or experience. Teachers' plans were available for scrutiny. From this evidence, indications are that pupils attain average standards by the time they leave the school. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils sing a number of familiar and new songs with enthusiasm, a good sense of pitch, melody and rhythm. They used tuned and untuned instruments to make a beat, and pulse or ostinato to accompany songs or music, with some sophisticated rhythms. This was seen in Year 6, when they used difficult timings such as 5/4, made a riff, and switched from one number of beats in a bar to another very quickly when accompanying jazz and blues band music. All pupils, by the end of the lesson, counted and used body or instrument percussion for three, four, five and seven beats in a bar. They followed this in conventional notation in terms of appropriate note indicators, crotchets and quavers, and bar lines. The majority of pupils discussed the effects the different instruments could make. Most understood that the jazz tradition came from the conjunction of African and European musical traditions. In Key Stage 1, pupils sing familiar songs and learn new ones and respond rhythmically to beats, rhythms and pulses with instruments or body percussion. In Year 2, they respond to drum beats to form an ostinato, with effects of different qualities, using paper bags, wooden claves, and plastic bricks to represent the different qualities of the homes of the three little pigs who featured in some of the songs. Pupils modulated their voices for loud and soft rendering of parts of songs they were practising for a mini-pantomime about Puss-in-Boots. Pupils identify instruments, such as clarinet, saxophone, double-bass and piano, when they listen to a piece of jazz composition.

150. Progress is satisfactory at both key stages. At Key Stage 1, pupils make satisfactory progress in discerning beat, pulse and rhythm, together with an increasing awareness of pitch and dynamics. At Key Stage 2, pupils show evidence of a growing awareness of the effects of musical elements, such as timbre, pitch, dynamics, beat, pulse and rhythm. They identify these when appraising a piece of music and discuss the effects such elements may have on the mood and feeling of the music. They develop better understanding

of forms of conventional notation concerning beat and pulse to a sophisticated degree for age. Pupils add to their knowledge of different styles of music, their derivation, and their composers. They sing with increasing energy and volume, but are able to moderate this when asked. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress for their capabilities and previous attainment.

151. Pupils in Key Stage 1 have satisfactory attitudes to the subject and enjoy music lessons. In Key Stage 2, particularly in Year 6, pupils have good attitudes towards their music lessons. They are enthusiastic about singing, keen about their music making and enjoy listening to music.

152. The quality of teaching in the subject is satisfactory at both key stages. In Year 6, teaching is imaginative and relevant to the Programmes of Study for the National Curriculum. Yearly plans, however, indicate an overemphasis on singing and rhythmic activities. There is less indication of sufficient experience in composing and performing and little indication of developing graphic notation in Key Stage 1 and for younger pupils in Key Stage 2.

153. Overall, the music curriculum and procedures for assessment are unsatisfactory. Although there is a suitable and satisfactory policy for the subject, other documentation indicates a lack of integration and coherence. There is no scheme for the subject and yearly planning is based upon introductions to the various commercial taped programmes, which the school uses for music lessons throughout the school. In Year 6, the co-ordinator has built her own plans around one of these programmes. There is an overemphasis on singing and rhythmic activities, and whilst composition is included in the year plans for Years 4 and 5, it is insufficiently specific throughout the school to form a satisfactory framework for continuing progress. Some appraisal through listening to music from other times and other places is well represented in the school's repertoire. This is an improvement on the situation reported in the previous OFSTED inspection.

154. The co-ordinator for the subject is a musician, has very good musical knowledge, and an infectious enthusiasm for the subject. She has good organisational skills, but other more pressing management responsibilities severely restrict her effectiveness as a co-ordinator. Consequently, she has not monitored lessons, listened to compositions or judged the development of graphic notation. She has sight of planning, but as this is derived from the commercial programmes selected, this only provides a very basic check. There remain, therefore, weaknesses in the management of the subject.

155. The music curriculum is enriched by performances from visiting musicians, by school concerts and festival occasions. There is a school choir, which though not currently in operation will sing in the spring and summer terms, when musical events are prepared. The choir joins in local schools' music festivals. Twelve pupils receive instrumental tuition in keyboard and wind instruments. Resources for the subject are satisfactory. There are collections of tuned and untuned percussion instruments for both key stages which are sufficient in number for each pupil to play at the same time. The repertoire of music on tapes and CDs is wide ranging and contains music from many countries in the world, including non-European traditions.

Physical education

156. By the time the pupils leave the school, they attain average standards for their ages in gymnastics, dance and team games. In addition, a significant majority of pupils swim 25 metres safely. In gymnastics, pupils achieve balanced movement while running, skipping and jumping. They use a range of techniques such as star and twist to land gracefully when jumping from apparatus. They climb ropes and bars using arm, leg and stomach muscles and know how to work safely when handling apparatus and travelling amongst other pupils. In dance, pupils interpret mood and rhythm, as when they interpret music connected with the story of Dracula. They indicate menace and fear by body and facial movements. In team games, they use a variety of skills to throw, control and receive a ball or other objects and, through their work outside, develop attacking and defensive tactical skills. Pupils evaluate their own and the performance of others, in order to improve their skills.

157. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in lessons. However, because the school lacks an overall scheme of work, the various aspects of the subject are insufficiently integrated to ensure that pupils build on their skills progressively over time. As they move through the school, in gymnastics, pupils become more in control of their movements, develop more ways of using their bodies to travel and improve their balance and ability to jump and land gracefully. In dance, they use increasingly imaginative ways of interpreting the music, become more responsive to suggestions and

prompting and build on their ability to synchronise movement with a partner in order to bring symmetry to their routines. In games, they move from playing simple games requiring only one or two rules, to understanding a range of rules in football and netball and an awareness of ways of out-thinking opponents.

158. Pupils' response to their lessons is good. They enjoy all aspects of the subject, warming up for sessions, striving to improve their performance and keenly competing individually or in teams. When required, they work co-operatively in pairs and wait patiently for their turn, when using gymnastics apparatus. They are keenly aware of the need to work safely and take care not to perform potentially hazardous movements. They listen well when their teachers explain how to perform movements better and respond well to the radio instructor during dance lessons.

159. The quality of teaching is good at Key Stage 2 and satisfactory at Key Stage 1. Many staff have good subject knowledge and skills. This means that they enthuse pupils with their own personal demonstration and provide clear guidance to enable them to improve their performance. In the best teaching, lessons are well balanced. Lively warm-up sessions are varied and exciting; main activities are well focused and challenging and there are many opportunities for evaluating performance. This ensures that pupils exercise appropriately, enjoy their work, learn new skills and techniques and understand what represents good work. Any weaknesses in teaching occur when teachers are less confident in their own subject knowledge and abilities. As a result, they provide pupils with a narrower range of activity and challenge and fewer opportunities to evaluate their own and the performance of others. Another good feature of the teaching is the requirement for pupils, who are unable to participate in lessons, because of illness or injury, to jot down notes about other pupils' good performance. This means that, despite not being physically involved, they still feel part of the lesson and gain more knowledge and understanding.

160. The school's physical education curriculum is satisfactory and covers all aspects of the National Curriculum areas of learning, including swimming at Key Stage 2. On average, pupils spend two hours per week on physical activity. Although pupils have teaching in gymnastics, dance and team games, each of those aspects stands alone in terms of its syllabus. There is no whole-school scheme of work for the subject. Gymnastics is taught by following a national scheme, dance is taught through a taped radio programme and the swimming curriculum follows the national swimming awards programme. Whilst this provides adequate teaching in each separate discipline, it means that teachers have no guidance on how to develop skills in an integrated way across the curriculum or progressively through successive year groups. This is a weakness in the management of the subject. The headteacher is the co-ordinator for the subject and teaches classes on a regular basis. This contributes well to the progress made by pupils in these classes. Resources for the subject are adequate and although the school hall is rather small for more boisterous activities, the accommodation for the subject is satisfactory. There is a hard standing area outside and a sizeable school field, which provides enough space for outdoor games and matches. The school plays friendly fixtures against other schools in football and netball but does not involve itself in local competition. The subject makes a satisfactory contribution to the social and moral development of the pupils, when they work together on gymnastics and dance routines and when they play games, according to set rules, and learn to accept defeat or victory with dignity.

134. **PART C: INSPECTION DATA**

161. **SUMMARY OF INSPECTION EVIDENCE**

The inspection was carried out by a team of four inspectors who spent a total of 14 inspector days in the school. Time spent observing teaching, scrutinising the work of pupils and checking their attainment by working with them during the inspection - 42 hours 55minutes. 10 hours 15 minutes at Pre-Key Stage 1, 14 hours 10 minutes at Key Stage 1 and 18 hours 30 minutes at Key Stage 2. In addition, a further 10 hours 20minutes were spent on the inspection activities listed below.

- 52 lessons or parts of lessons were observed as were a number of registration periods, assemblies, playtimes, lunchtimes and extracurricular activities;
- discussions were held with all teaching staff and some non-teaching staff;
- many pupils were heard to read and were questioned about their mathematical knowledge and understanding;
- three samples of pupils' work across the full range of ability in all year groups were inspected in addition to work examined during lessons;
- all available school documentation was analysed;
- attendance records, pupils' records kept by the school and teachers' planning documents were examined;
- the budget figures were inspected;
- discussions were held with pupils, parents and governors;
 - a parents' meeting was held and the views of the 19 parents at this meeting and those of the 46 families who responded to a questionnaire were taken into account.

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162.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	192	5	94	48

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Teachers and classes

• Qualified teachers (YR – Y6)

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent):	8.6
Number of pupils per qualified teacher:	22

• Education support staff (YR – Y6)

Total number of education support staff:	10
Total aggregate hours worked each week:	183.7

Average class size:	27
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• Financial data

Financial year: 1998/99

	£
Total Income	351,287.00
Total Expenditure	335,865.00
Expenditure per pupil	1654.51
Balance brought forward from previous year	-17,889.00
Balance carried forward to next year	-2467.00

PARENTAL SURVEY

Number of questionnaires sent out: 142

Number of questionnaires
returned: 46

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	53	44	2	0	0
I would find it easy to approach the school with questions or problems to do with my child(ren)	61	39	0	0	0
The school handles complaints from parents well	39	34	20	7	0
The school gives me a clear understanding of what is taught	33	65	2	0	0
The school keeps me well informed about my child(ren)'s progress	46	43	4	7	0
The school enables my child(ren) to achieve a good standard of work	48	46	7	0	0
The school encourages children to get involved in more than just their daily lessons	47	49	4	0	0
I am satisfied with the work that my child(ren) is/are expected to do at home	48	46	2	4	0
The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on my child(ren)	50	46	2	2	0
The school achieves high standards of good behaviour	49	42	9	0	0
My child(ren) like(s) school	70	28	2	0	0

Other issues raised by parents

Concern was expressed about the lack of opportunity for the higher attaining pupils due to the high numbers of pupils with special educational needs. The co-ordinator for special educational needs was highly praised by the parents. There was concern expressed about the lack of encouragement for pupils who wished to sit the selective test for grammar schools. The opportunity was there, but some parents felt that they had to push to receive the information and for their child to be entered for the test.

