

# INSPECTION REPORT

**Davington Primary School**  
Faversham

LEA area: Kent

Unique Reference Number: 118338

Headteacher: Mr M Williamson

Reporting inspector: Mrs L Woods  
21079

Dates of inspection: 4 - 7 October 1999

Under OFSTED contract number: 707472

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
Type of control:	County
Age range of pupils:	4 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Priory Row Davington Faversham Kent ME13 7EQ
Telephone number:	01795 532401
Fax number:	01795 537971
Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr K Burbidge
Date of previous inspection:	June 1996

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

<b>Team members</b>	<b>Subject responsibilities</b>	<b>Aspect responsibilities</b>
Mrs L Woods, Rgl	Information technology Art Design and technology	Main findings Key issues for action Characteristics of the school Attainment and progress Leadership and management
Mrs C Webb, Lay inspector	Equal opportunities	Attitudes, behaviour and personal development Attendance Support, guidance and pupils' welfare Partnership with parents and the community Staffing, accommodation and resources for learning
Mr D Houghton	English Physical education	Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development Efficiency
Mrs E Pacey	Mathematics Religious education	Curriculum and assessment
Mrs J Bavin	Under-fives Special educational needs Geography History	
Mrs A Fraser	Science Music	Quality of teaching

The inspection contractor was:

TWA *Inspections* Ltd  
5 Lakeside  
Werrington  
Peterborough  
Cambs PE4 6QZ  
Tel: 01733 570753

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### What the school does well

- The children in reception make a good start to school life, and make good progress in their work.
- Standards in pupils' artwork and in their singing are high.
- The pastoral care and concern for the well-being of the pupils in the school is very good.
- Teaching is good or better in 51 per cent of lessons, and very good in 18 per cent.
- Learning support assistants are used very well to provide good support for pupils with special educational needs.
- The range of extra-curricular activities is excellent.
- Attendance is good and pupils like coming to school.
- Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good and their relationships are very good.
- Provision for pupils' social development is very good.
- The partnership between the school and parents is good, and with the community is very good.
- The efficiency of financial planning and school administration is very good.

### Where the school has weaknesses

- I. Attainment for children under five, and in English throughout the school, is below average. Attainment in information technology is unsatisfactory.
- II. The curriculum is not planned in sufficient detail.
- III. Procedures for, and the use of, assessment of pupils' attainment and progress are unsatisfactory.
- IV. The school does not have effective systems for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning.

**Some of these weaknesses were also pointed out in the school's last inspection, but they are outweighed by what the school does well. They will form the basis of the governors' action plan, which will be sent to all parents or guardians of pupils at the school.**

### How the school has improved since the last inspection

The school has made progress in addressing some of the key issues raised by the previous inspection, but deficiencies remain in important areas, and overall progress has been unsatisfactory. The school has successfully addressed the issue of raising levels of attainment. These have risen steadily year-on-year in the end of key stage standard assessment tasks since the previous inspection. Teaching in ability groups for English and mathematics in Years 5 and 6 has had a positive impact on addressing the needs of more able pupils. The school's curriculum provides pupils with a broad range of learning experiences, which is particularly good in relation to the arts. Opportunities for investigative work have improved, except in mathematics. However, levels of attainment are still not related to the National Curriculum programmes of study. A useful assessment policy has not been established and assessment is not well used. Management roles have been reviewed and distributed more equitably, but the implementation of these roles is significantly under-developed.

The school has suffered considerable problems in relation to staffing and severe budget constraints, which have had a significant impact on this lack of progress. For example, the deputy headteacher and assessment co-ordinator, and the co-ordinator for special educational

needs both had long-term sickness, and subsequently retired. Additionally, the growth in size of the school has not been properly reflected in the devolution of management structures. The school recognises these deficiencies, and most issues form a key part of the school development plan. The school is in a satisfactory position to improve in the future.

**Standards in subjects**

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

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

The percentage of pupils identified as having special educational needs, over 50 per cent of the school, is well above the national average. This affects the school's performance in national tests. The table shows that, in 1998, pupils' attainment by the age of 11 was below average in English, and was well below the national average in mathematics and science compared to the national picture. Compared with schools which have a similar intake of pupils, attainment in English was above average. Attainment was average in science, although it was below average in mathematics. The 1999 end of Key Stage 2 results, however, show a significant improvement in all three tested areas. Results from the 1998 end of Key Stage 1 standard assessment tasks for seven-year-olds show attainment to be very low in reading, writing and mathematics compared to the national average, and well below average in all three tested areas in comparison with similar schools. The 1999 test results, as at Key Stage 2, show a significant improvement overall.

The school has successfully addressed the key issue from the 1996 inspection, to raise attainment of more able pupils. Standards by the end of Key Stage 2 have risen steadily in the intervening years. In 1996, six per cent of pupils were selected for the grammar school; 23 per cent were successful in being offered places in 1999. Teaching in groups organised by ability for English and mathematics, in Years 5 and 6, and the largely successful introduction of both literacy and numeracy hours, have had a positive effect on standards, particularly for the older pupils.

Most children enter the reception classes with very low levels of attainment in speaking and those aspects of their development that are dependent on speech and language. By the age of five, children attain the expected levels in their physical development and make satisfactory progress in this area of learning. However, the extent of their expressive difficulties means that most children's attainment overall is below expectations in personal and social development, language and literacy, mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world and creative development, as measured against the expectations of the Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning. However, children make good progress in these areas of their learning.

Inspection evidence shows that attainment by the end of Key Stages 1 and 2 is below average in English, and is broadly average in mathematics and science. Attainment in information



technology is below national expectations, with too little emphasis placed on the subject, either in its own right, or on its value in supporting work in other subjects. In religious education, attainment is in line with the expectations in the locally agreed syllabus by the end of both key stages. Standards in art are good throughout the school. Pupils attain standards appropriate to their ages in design and technology, geography, history, music and physical education.

· **Quality of teaching**

Teaching in	Under 5	5 – 7 years	7 – 11 years
English	good	good	good
Mathematics	good	good	good
Science	/	good	good
Information technology	/	satisfactory*	satisfactory*
Religious education	/	satisfactory	satisfactory
Other subjects	good	satisfactory	satisfactory

Throughout the school the quality of teaching makes a significant contribution to pupils' good attitudes to learning, and their good progress overall. The quality of teaching varies between classes rather than between subjects. \*Teaching seen in information technology was satisfactory, but too little of the subject is taught. Teaching in art was consistently good or better. Teaching is satisfactory or better in 93 per cent of lessons. It is good or better in 51 per cent and very good in 18 per cent. Seven unsatisfactory lessons were seen.

The quality of teaching for children in reception classes is never less than satisfactory and is good or better in 70 per cent of lessons seen. The quality of relationships between adults, and between staff and children, is a strength of the provision. Staff have a good understanding of children's needs, and work very hard to meet them. Teachers at Key Stages 1 and 2 generally have good subject knowledge, and understand the requirements of the National Curriculum satisfactorily, except in information technology. Teachers plan closely together in year groups, but teaching is not always consistent in parallel classes. The very best teaching is characterised by challenge and excitement, which creates a lively buzz for learning. Teachers have good expectations of pupils' attainment and of their behaviour and effort. Their patience with pupils who are reluctant to learn, and have low aspirations, is very successful in promoting more positive attitudes to learning. Most teachers make good use of resources to provide pupils with effective visual stimuli, which has a positive impact on attainment in lessons. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs in separate specialist sessions is mostly very good and never less than good. It is characterised by very good relationships, firm but friendly control and very clear purpose. Teaching is unsatisfactory when learning objectives are not defined clearly enough and when the pace is too slow, so that pupils become restless and bored. Occasionally lessons have insufficient direct teaching to promote effective learning, and teachers do not sufficiently tailor tasks to meet the needs of individual pupils. On these occasions pupils make insufficient progress.

*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 clearly distinguish right from wrong, and understand and accept the school's rewards and sanctions. They are polite and friendly, and the school is an orderly community.
Attendance	Good. Pupils enjoy coming to school and almost all arrive promptly in the mornings.
Ethos*	Good. Teachers are committed to achieving high standards, and to providing pupils with a broad and challenging range of experiences. They take an active part in extra-curricular activities to extend these. The work of the school is supported positively by the vast majority of parents. The school's aims and values are implemented well.
Leadership and management	Satisfactory overall. The school is well led by the headteacher, who provides caring and committed leadership, with a significant focus on the pastoral care of the pupils. He is well supported by staff and governors, and relationships throughout the school are good. However, individual roles for managing and monitoring the curriculum are not fully developed, and the monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning is informal.
Curriculum	Satisfactory. The curriculum meets legal requirements. It is broad and balanced, and enriched by an excellent range of extra-curricular activities. Planning of the curriculum, however, is not sufficiently detailed to ensure the progressive development of pupils' knowledge and skills.
Special educational needs	Good. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported in class and in specific withdrawal sessions. They make good progress. The special educational needs co-ordinator provides very effective leadership in the provision for these pupils.
Spiritual, moral, social & cultural development	Good overall. Provision for pupils' social development is very good. The school positively promotes qualities such as compassion, dignity and empathy. Pupils' social skills and moral values are encouraged through daily lessons and assemblies. In addition to visits to France, the school organises a wide range of visits to places of local and national interest. The school is aware that provision to raise pupils' multi-cultural awareness is not always given sufficient attention throughout the curriculum.
Staffing, resources and accommodation	Good overall. The school is fully staffed with appropriately qualified teachers, whose responsibilities are well matched to their qualifications and experience. Classroom and learning support assistants provide very valuable support. The school has adequate resources for all subjects, and these are good for English, art, music and physical education. Some books in the libraries are old and need replacing, and many resources to support the early years curriculum are rather shabby. The internal accommodation is satisfactory and the very extensive, attractive and well-kept grounds make a positive contribution to pupils' education.
Value for money	Good.

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

**The parents' views of the school**

<b>What most parents like about the school</b>	<b>What some parents are not happy about</b>
<p>V. Parents support the view that their children like school.</p> <p>VI. They are pleased with the attitudes, values and standards of behaviour the school promotes, and the care provided for their children.</p> <p>VII. They feel that teachers are approachable when they have problems, and they are welcomed to be involved in the life of the school.</p>	<p>VIII. Some parents have concerns about the school's approach to meeting government targets for attainment.</p> <p>IX. The amount and quality of work children are expected to do at home - too much, too little and inconsistently set.</p>

A very high proportion, 71 per cent, of parents' questionnaires were returned. Inspectors' findings support parents' positive views of the school. The opportunity to work in class at lunch-time was appreciated by those pupils to whom inspectors spoke, although others may not be so happy about it. Teachers make satisfactory use of homework, although not all of their plans clearly identify the homework to be set. Views expressed on returned questionnaires raised some additional concerns, including lack of use of the swimming pool and about playground supervision. Inspectors found the level of supervision to be satisfactory, but have no evidence on the use of the swimming pool, although over 90 per cent of pupils can swim 25 metres unaided by the time they leave school. Other individual concerns should be raised directly with the school.

## Key issues for action

The governors, headteacher and staff should:

- X. improve attainment in English (11, 97–101);
  - raise standards still further for children under five in reception by providing more opportunities for outdoor play and improving the resources available to them (5, 25, 35, 70, 72, 79–96);
  - raise standards in information technology by making full use of the available resources;  
(12, 14, 15, 36, 119-123)
  
- XI. develop a clear structure for curriculum planning by:
  - XII. providing an appropriate scheme of work for physical education at Key Stage 2;
  - XIII. providing specific information of the level of work to be expected in each year group;
  - XIV. including greater detail of the work to be expected by pupils of different ability within the class;
  - XV. securing the sequential development of pupils' skills and understanding of concepts throughout the school;  
(27, 34, 37, 38, 61)
  
- XVI. develop and implement useful and effective assessment procedures by:
  - XVII. providing information on the attainment and progress of individual pupils;
  - XVIII. assisting teachers in planning work for the needs of the pupils with different levels of ability in their class;
  - XIX. enabling realistic and challenging targets to be set, in order to raise levels of attainment overall;  
(42, 43, 51, 61, 103, 109)
  
- XX. improve the management of the school by:
  - XXI. providing specific job descriptions for all posts of responsibility within the school, which include appropriate targets;
  - XXII. ensuring individual co-ordinators provide clear action plans for the development of their areas of responsibility, including time-scales;
  - XXIII. clarifying the roles of senior management and subject co-ordinators to ensure an effective overview of the work of the school;
  - XXIV. establishing and implementing effective systems for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning;  
(61, 62, 65, 66)

In addition to the key issues above, the following points could be included in the governors' action plan:

- improve provision for pupils to develop mental arithmetic skills and opportunities for mathematical investigations; (14, 104, 105)
- provide more opportunities for pupils to engage in debate and discussion, and show initiative; (13, 47, 99)
- address the small proportion of unsatisfactory teaching; (10, 15, 30)
- improve the quality of marking; (43)
- to improve the detail included in pupils' annual reports; (58)
- evaluating the targets in the school development plan, to establish progress towards them and the success of actions; (68)

improve library resources; (72, 77)  
extend multi-cultural resources and experiences, and planned opportunities for pupils'  
spiritual development; (45, 46, 49)  
address health and safety concerns. (54)

## • **Introduction**

### • **Characteristics of the school**

1. Davington Primary School is situated on the western edge of Faversham. The old school buildings date from 1882, with other buildings added up until 1980. It has extensive and attractive grounds. The school remains popular and oversubscribed, as found by the previous inspection, and has grown in size, from 12 to 14 classes, since June 1996. Forty-two of the current reception intake are siblings. There are currently 429 boys and girls on roll, with 58 of these attending school part time in reception. This is bigger than average for schools of this type. Historically this was a social-priority school, and the high proportion of pupils with special educational needs remains. Pupils come from a wide variety of social backgrounds, but there is very little cultural mix in the school, which reflects the locality. One pupil comes from a Chinese background.
2. Twenty-nine per cent of full time pupils are entitled to free school meals, which is above the national average of 19.9 per cent. One hundred and eighty-nine pupils, 50.9 per cent of those attending school full time, are on the school's register of special educational needs. This is well above the national average of 18.3 per cent. Seventy-four of these pupils, 20 per cent of full time pupils, are at Stage 3 and above of the Code of Practice<sup>1</sup> for the identification of such pupils, and two have statements of special educational need.
3. The school has a comprehensive set of aims encompassed by the first; 'to provide stimulating and caring environment where children will be encouraged to express themselves, and to observe, discuss, reflect, create, communicate and problem-solve'. These aims are reflected well in practice. An exceptionally high return rate of parents' questionnaire, 71 per cent, shows good support for the work of the school from the majority of parents, which was also evident at the parents' meeting. Parents are closely involved in school activities. Some, however, express concern over homework.
4. The school development plan provides a clear overview of areas to be addressed each term. Key targets for autumn 1999 include home-school liaison, the introduction of the Numeracy Hour, setting up a literacy support programme, creating a policy for investigational work and a review of the physical education policy, amongst others. It includes targets, key tasks, success criteria, personnel, resources and timescales, but does not include an evaluation of the school's success in meeting these targets.

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<sup>1</sup> Code of Practice – this gives practical advice to schools and local education authorities about their responsibilities and tasks to ensure that pupils who have special educational needs receive the most appropriate help to further their learning and personal development. This is a statutory duty under the 1993 Education Act.

Stages of special educational needs range from Stage 1, when limited additional support is provided for pupils entirely from within the school, to Stage 5, which ensures that a pupil has a statement outlining his or her needs and shows what additional and specific support that pupil will receive. Stages 3, 4 and 5 involve external specialists as well as staff within the school.

4. **Key indicators**  
**Attainment at Key Stage 1<sup>2</sup>**

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

Year	Boys	Girls	Total
1999	31	29	60

4. <b>National Curriculum Test/Task Results</b>		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	Boys	21 (12)	18 (12)	19 (11)
	Girls	16 (15)	17 (15)	19 (15)
	Total	37 (27)	35 (27)	38 (26)
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	62 (49)	58 (49)	63 (47)
	National	n/a (80)	n/a (81)	n/a (84)

4. <b>Teacher Assessments</b>		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	Boys	18 (11)	22 (12)	26 (7)
	Girls	16 (14)	19 (15)	20 (12)
	Total	34 (25)	41 (27)	46 (19)
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	57 (45)	68 (49)	77 (35)
	National	n/a (81)	n/a (85)	n/a (86)

<sup>2</sup> Percentages in parentheses refer to the year before the latest reporting year

### Attainment at Key Stage 2<sup>3</sup>

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2

for latest reporting year:

Year	Boys	Girls	Total
1999	33	31	64

4. National Curriculum Test Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	Boys	20 (12)	20 (10)	25 (13)
	Girls	17 (16)	10 (11)	17 (15)
	Total	37 (28)	30 (21)	42 (28)
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	58 (51)	47 (38)	66 (51)
	National	n/a (65)	n/a (59)	n/a (69)

4. Teacher Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	Boys	21 (12)	19 (10)	25 (14)
	Girls	17 (15)	13 (14)	16 (15)
	Total	38 (27)	32 (24)	41 (29)
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	59 (49)	50 (44)	64 (53)
	National	n/a (65)	n/a (65)	n/a (72)

<sup>3</sup> Percentages in parentheses refer to the year before the latest reporting year

4. **Attendance**

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

		%
Authorised Absence	School	6.2
	National comparative data	5.7
Unauthorised Absence	School	0.1
	National comparative data	0.5

4.

4. **Exclusions**

Number of exclusions of pupils (of statutory school age) during the previous year:

	Number
Fixed period	1
Permanent	0

4. **Quality of teaching**

Percentage of teaching observed which is:

	%
Very good or better	18
Satisfactory or better	93
Less than satisfactory	7



## 4. PART A: ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

### 4. Educational standards achieved by pupils at the school

#### 4. Attainment and progress

5. Most children enter the reception classes with very low levels of attainment in speaking and those aspects of their development that are dependent on speech and language. Standards of attainment for children under five were judged to be sound in the previous report, although the criteria used at that time were different from current expectations. Current inspection findings are that by the age of five, as measured against the expectations of the Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning<sup>4</sup>, children attain the expected levels in physical development and make satisfactory progress in this area of learning. However, the extent of their expressive difficulties means that most children's attainment overall is below expectations in personal and social development, language and literacy, mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world and creative development. Children make good progress in these areas of learning.
6. Results from the 1998 end of Key Stage 1 standard assessment tasks show attainment to be very low in reading, writing and mathematics compared to the national average, and well below average in all three tested areas by comparison with similar schools. Attainment at the higher Level 3, however, compared with similar schools, was average. Results in these tests have been below the national average for the past three years. They fell in 1998, and girls have continuously performed better than boys. The 1999 test results show a significant improvement overall, and the performance of boys and girls is broadly equal, with boys doing better in reading comprehension. In reading, 62 per cent of pupils attained the expected Level 2 and above, with 18 per cent reaching the higher Level 3. In writing, 58 per cent attained Level 2 and above, and three per cent reached Level 3. Mathematics results show 63 per cent of pupils reaching Level 2 and above, and 12 per cent attaining Level 3. Teacher assessment of attainment in science, with 77 per cent of pupils reaching Level 2 and above, compared with 35 per cent in 1998, also shows a significant improvement.
7. The results from the 1998 end of Key Stage 2 tests show attainment in English was below average against the national picture, but above average compared to similar schools. Attainment was well below the national average in mathematics and science. Compared to similar schools attainment was below average in mathematics and average in science. Girls outperformed boys in English, but results in mathematics and science were similar. Whilst attainment in all three tested areas has been below the national average over the past three years, results show a steady rate of improvement. Test results show that pupils' performance at the higher Level 5 in 1998 was very high in English and well above average in science compared with similar schools.
8. The 1999 end of Key Stage 2 results show a significant improvement in all three tested areas. In English, 58 per cent of pupils reached the expected Level 4 and above, with

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<sup>4</sup> Desirable learning outcomes – these are goals for learning for children by the time they enter compulsory education at the age of five. They mainly refer to literacy (speaking, listening, reading (recognising their own names and common words, enjoyment of stories, books and pictures) and writing, e.g. writing their names and recognising UPPER and lower case), numeracy (recognising the meaning of numbers, beginning to add and subtract small numbers, sorting and matching objects and numbers and recognising common shapes and patterns) and personal and social skills (showing confidence, self-respect, ability to work with other children and adults, concentrating, offering ideas, taking turns and sharing).

nine per cent attaining the higher Level 5. In mathematics, 47 per cent of pupils attained Level 4 and above, and 20 per cent attained Level 5. Results in science show 66 per cent of pupils reaching Level 4 and above, and 13 per cent reaching Level 5. In these tests, boys did better than girls overall.

9. The school has successfully addressed the key issue from the 1996 inspection, to raise the attainment of more able pupils. Standards by the end of Key Stage 2 have risen steadily in the intervening years. In 1996, six per cent of pupils were selected for the grammar school; 23 per cent were successful in being offered places in 1999. Teaching in groups organised by ability for English and mathematics, in Years 5 and 6, and the largely successful introduction of both literacy and numeracy hours, have had a positive effect on standards, particularly for the older pupils. The school has satisfactorily identified, and addressed, variations in the performance of boys and girls. The high proportion of pupils with special educational needs in the school, however, means that attainment in national tests remains below average by comparison with all schools.
10. Throughout the school, attainment is satisfactory or better in 73 per cent of lessons, and good in 19 per cent. Attainment is slightly higher at Key Stage 1 than at Key Stage 2, as was found by the previous inspection. This difference is largely explained by observations of lower ability groups in literacy and numeracy in Years 5 and 6, and specific withdrawal groups to support pupils with special educational needs. However, in a small minority of lessons where attainment is unsatisfactory, this is directly linked to unsatisfactory teaching. In almost all lessons pupils are placed in ability groups, but not all teachers are successful in providing work which is matched satisfactorily to each group. The same work is provided for all, and is too hard for some and too easy for others.
11. Evidence from the work scrutiny and lesson observations shows that attainment in English is below average by the end of both key stages. Although the National Literacy Strategy has been introduced satisfactorily, the guidelines are not followed fully, particularly in respect of guided reading sessions. However, all year groups have extended writing sessions, which is having a positive effect on attainment in this area. Attainment in mathematics and science is broadly average by the end of both key stages. The National Numeracy Strategy has been introduced well, although some mental arithmetic sessions lack pace and content.
12. Attainment in information technology is below national expectations by the end of both key stages. Too little emphasis is placed on the subject, either in its own right, or in its value in supporting work in other subjects. In religious education, attainment is in line with the expectations in the locally agreed syllabus by the end of both key stages, but pupils' writing skills are not fully developed in this subject, with the same text being seen in all pupils' books, indicating copied work. Standards in art and music are good throughout the school. At both key stages, pupils attain standards appropriate to their ages in geography, history and physical education. There was too little evidence to judge standards in design and technology.
13. In the core skills, standards in listening are good, but in speaking they are just average. Almost all pupils listen with interest and concentration in lessons. However, many of the younger pupils in particular have poor speech patterns and have difficulty in articulating what they want to say. These improve as pupils progress through the school, but speaking skills overall are under-developed through limited opportunities for pupils to

engage in debate and discussion. Literacy skills are developed satisfactorily. Standards in reading and writing are broadly satisfactory by end of both key stages, but for a significant minority of pupils' these are below average. Almost all pupils enjoy reading, and discuss their books intelligently. Writing skills are taught systematically, with an appropriate emphasis on spelling, handwriting and presentation.

14. Pupils' numeracy skills are satisfactory. Mental strategies have been introduced appropriately in most classes, but some sessions lack pace, and pupils overall are not quick at mental calculations. Mathematical skills are used satisfactorily across the curriculum, particularly in science; for example, to record results as graphs and charts. The key issue identified by the previous inspection, to provide more opportunities for investigative work, has been partially addressed. Skills of scientific enquiry are used well in the subject itself, and in art, for example, to evaluate style and colour, but are under-developed across the curriculum as a whole, particularly in mathematics. The use of information technology skills across the curriculum is unsatisfactory. The school makes very good provision for the arts, with a broad curriculum and a wealth of extra-curricular activities.
15. Throughout the school, progress was satisfactory or better in 91 per cent of lessons seen. It was good or better in 44 per cent and very good in 11 per cent of lessons. Progress remains broadly similar to that found by the previous inspection. Good and very good progress in English was seen in 43 per cent of lessons, and progress over time in this subject is satisfactory. Progress in mathematics is satisfactory at Key Stage 1 and good at Key Stage 2. Pupils made good progress in nearly 50 per cent of lessons in science. However, progress in information technology is unsatisfactory throughout the school through a lack of emphasis on the progressive development of skills, and a lack of importance placed on the subject as a whole. Progress in religious education is satisfactory overall although two unsatisfactory lessons were seen. Pupils make good progress in art and music throughout the school. Progress in other subjects is satisfactory overall, although there was too little evidence to make a secure judgement on progress in design and technology. The uneven progress by different groups of pupils, identified in the 1996 report, has been addressed in part, but unsatisfactory teaching contributes to the small amount remaining in most core subjects, where inappropriate challenge is provided for groups within the class.
16. Pupils with special educational needs represent just over 50 per cent of the school. They are well supported, and in the majority of lessons attain standards appropriate to their abilities, although these are below the national average. Teaching in ability groups, particularly for literacy and numeracy in Years 5 and 6, means that their needs are addressed well, although in some literacy sessions teachers acknowledge that the work lacks appropriate challenge. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress overall in relation to the targets set for them. Progress is particularly good in well taught lessons, where the work is well matched to pupils' abilities and teachers' expectations are high. In separate specialist sessions offering support for speech and language, or for emotional difficulties, pupils often make very good progress.

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

17. Pupils' attitudes towards school are good. Parents are delighted with the positive attitudes and values the school teaches their children and appreciate the happy, purposeful atmosphere engendered by the school's good ethos. Pupils like coming to

school and settle happily to tasks set for them whilst awaiting registration. Children are effectively encouraged, from the time they attend the '3+ club', to develop their social skills and to learn to do what adults ask of them. Children in the reception classes behave and concentrate well. They are keen to please adults and develop positive attitudes to their learning. They listen carefully to adults in large or small groups. However, most children lack the inquisitiveness and spontaneity associated with their age. They mostly show a good level of interest in the activities provided by adults, but they do not yet demonstrate a range of feelings, initiate ideas or try to solve problems to the extent expected for their age.

18. As pupils progress through the school their positive attitudes to work continue. They are interested in their work, and want to do well. In almost all lessons pupils work conscientiously at tasks set for them; for example, some pupils in Year 4 preferred to finish their poetry rather than go out to mid-morning break. The key issue in the last report, to pay more attention to the needs of the more able pupils, has been addressed satisfactorily. Pupils of all abilities are now appropriately challenged, and make good progress in the majority of lessons. Teaching in ability groups, for literacy and numeracy sessions in particular, has boosted pupils' confidence and self-esteem, as well as raising the standards they achieve. For example, pupils revelled in their success when they managed to recognise multiples of two and five times tables in a Year 5 low ability group lesson.
19. Pupils with special educational needs have very positive attitudes to their learning overall. They are very well motivated in separate sessions where they work either individually or in a small group to address specific skills. They generally concentrate well in class and persevere impressively when they are working at challenging tasks in groups arranged according to their level of need. They take justifiable pride in their achievements and forge good relationships with their class teachers and support staff.
20. Relationships between pupils, and between pupils and all adults, are very good. Mutual respect is enjoyed, and the school functions as a happy, purposeful community. Pupils are polite, holding doors open for their peers as well as for adults, and are eager to explain their lessons to visitors. They are very caring and tolerant of those less fortunate than themselves; for example, in one Year 2 class they burst into spontaneous applause when a child with one-to-one support gave a correct answer.
21. Pupils' behaviour is good in the classroom, in assemblies and around the school. Although play outside is boisterous and exuberant, bullying is not a problem at this school. Playground equipment is shared amicably and games of conkers are keenly contested. The award-winning Quiet Area is well used. Pupils know what is expected of their behaviour, and what will happen if they transgress. They are keen to be chosen as Student of the Month, which celebrates their achievements, attitude or general helpfulness. House points are valued and the whole school eagerly awaits the announcement of the number of points achieved by each house during the Monday assembly. Pupils regard sanctions as fair. When given a yellow card, they have the opportunity to negotiate with teachers to negate this by promising, for example, to behave well for a set amount of time. This contributes positively to both behaviour and pupils' personal development. Parents are rarely invited to see the headteacher about their child's behaviour and there has only been one fixed-term exclusion in the past year.
22. Pupils' personal development is good. They develop a good sense of natural justice

and an awareness of their duties and responsibilities to the school community and to the world outside during their time at school. Pupils enjoy supporting charities and were, for example, looking forward to the Jeans for Genes day. They are aware that others follow different beliefs and traditions and are interested in these. All benefit from their contact with French children when they visit the school or go on exchange visits. Pupils want to help and, when given charge of the registers, or appointed to act as door and library monitors, they carry out their duties conscientiously and well. The lively competition between litter pickers in Years 5 and 6 results in a litter-free school environment. Year 6 prefects help the teachers and are respected by their peers. Many pupils go to the local library on their own initiative to research their personal interests. Pupils are proud of their school and pleased when chosen to represent it as a member of a team, choir or dance group.

### **Attendance**

23. Attendance overall is good. The attendance percentage during the week of the inspection, at nearly 97 per cent, was very good. Pupils like coming to school and most arrive on or before time in the mornings, waiting sensibly in the playground for the school bell to ring and for their teachers to collect them. Registers are called correctly; in French in some classes, with pupils replying to their names with either 'Bonjour' or by counting, which they enjoy.

### **23. Quality of education provided**

#### **Teaching**

24. The quality of teaching makes a significant contribution to the positive attitudes pupils bring to their learning. Throughout the school, teaching is good or better in 51 per cent of lessons. Ninety-three per cent of all lessons observed were satisfactory or better, with 18 per cent being very good. This is an improvement since the last inspection, with a higher percentage of good and very good teaching, and a reduction in the percentage of unsatisfactory teaching. Seven lessons in all were unsatisfactory.
25. The quality of teaching for children in the reception classes is never less than satisfactory and is good or better in 70 per cent of lessons seen. Direct teaching for children under five is equally balanced between good and very good teaching. Teachers and classroom assistants work well together to provide a satisfactory range of experiences. The quality of relationships between adults, and between staff and children, is a strength of the provision. Staff have a good understanding of children's needs and how best to meet them, and they work assiduously to promote children's expressive language. Where teaching is indirect, during structured play activities, the quality of resources does not support staff sufficiently well in their intention to stimulate children's language skills and active curiosity.
26. Teachers at Key Stages 1 and 2 generally have good subject knowledge, and understand the requirements of the National Curriculum satisfactorily. Teaching is satisfactory in the Literacy Hour. Teaching is good in the Numeracy Hour and in art. Specialist expertise in music supports the quality of teaching very well. Teachers subject knowledge in information technology, however, is less secure.

27. Teachers' planning is satisfactory overall. They plan closely together in year groups, but teaching is not always consistent in parallel classes. This was evident, for example, when similar lessons were seen in parallel classes in the same year group. A weakness is that not all teachers amend their plans in relation to the progress pupils are making each week, leading to variation in the quality of learning. Apart from those for the literacy and numeracy hours, short-term plans do not have a format that requires teachers to state clearly how they will meet the needs of different groups within the class. Consequently there is some inconsistency in the provision for pupils of differing abilities between classes. Learning support assistants are well briefed for most lessons, but are not always fully involved in lessons; for example, in physical education.
28. Teachers' methods and organisation are good. Most teachers set lessons off to a prompt start, introducing important concepts and principles well. For example, in extended writing lessons for the older year groups, pupils' efforts to plan stories are used well to demonstrate effective story structures. In most lessons there is a good balance between direct teaching and opportunities for pupils to participate in paired, group or individual activities. Good practical sessions are organised, for example, in science, music and art, making good use of limited space in some classrooms. Good lessons finish with an effective review of the main learning points. Groups of pupils successfully explain their work to the rest of the class, seen, for example, in a Year 3 mathematics lesson on two-dimensional shapes and in Year 2 art lessons on observational drawing of fruit. This encourages pupils to take pride in their achievements and appreciate each other's efforts. In a Year 1 mathematics lesson, for example, measuring with non-standard units, all the pupils gave themselves a clap.
29. The very best teaching creates a lively buzz for learning. For example, a very good history lesson in Year 2, helped pupils to empathise with Anne Frank's life in hiding, through a role play exercise. Dramatic and evocative story-telling, such as 'The Working Children', and good use of humour, for example, when considering the story of 'The Witches' in lessons in Years 5 and 6, stimulates pupils' imaginations effectively. Teachers' own enthusiasm for their subject, such as in English, art and music, motivates pupils very well. Carefully structured questions, for example, in a Year 4 design and technology lesson on money containers, contribute effectively to capturing pupils' interest and developing their powers of reasoning. Challenge and pace effectively generate an air of excitement. In a lively mental arithmetic session, for example, the teachers demand for pupils to 'show me, tell me' their answers caused such enthusiasm that one pupil wailed 'I can't find my three!'. Good teachers share learning objectives effectively with the pupils, as seen in almost all mathematics lessons, and acknowledge pupils' success as the lesson proceeds. As a result, pupils are highly motivated and grow in confidence. Very clear review of the key points from lessons, for example, in work on percentages for older pupils, is effective in consolidating learning. Lessons that have a very good pace, with challenging tasks, motivate pupils well. Teachers' patience with pupils who are reluctant to learn and have low aspirations is very successful in prompting more positive attitudes to learning.
30. Teaching is unsatisfactory, however, when learning objectives are not defined clearly enough, and the lesson loses its way. In some lessons the same work is provided for all pupils. This is pitched too high for some ability groups, and pupils are unable to complete the task. A few pupils become distressed by this, as in science. The same work is too easy for other ability groups, and they become restless and bored.

Occasionally lessons have insufficient direct teaching and pupils are not clear what they are expected to do. Conversely, in some unsatisfactory lessons, teachers talk for too long, so that pupils lose the main teaching points and make little progress.

31. Teachers have high expectations of pupils' attainment, and of their behaviour and effort. They have a very good understanding of the needs of pupils with difficulties. They treat pupils sensitively, particularly those with special educational needs, always ensuring that less able pupils are included fully in discussion. Consequently, a good working atmosphere is sustained in most lessons. Special educational needs assistants provide good quality support. Teachers manage pupils very well, fostering very good relationships. Teachers praise pupils extensively, acknowledging their success and effort, and giving them a positive sense of achievement.
32. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs in separate specialist sessions is mostly very good and never less than good. It is characterised by very good relationships, firm but friendly control and very clear purpose. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs in mainstream classes is good overall in both key stages. Grouping pupils according to their level of need for numeracy and literacy supports good teaching. Occasionally when teaching is unsatisfactory, teachers do not sufficiently tailor tasks to meet the needs of individual pupils. On these occasions pupils make insufficient progress.
33. Most teachers make good use of resources to provide pupils with effective visual stimuli, which has a positive impact on attainment in lessons. In Year 1 science lessons, for example, pupils used mirrors effectively to examine their own features when investigating similarities and differences between human beings. Most teachers make valuable use of overhead projectors to illustrate teaching points, although in one lesson this caused regular geometric shapes to become distorted. Good displays of pupils' work in most classrooms provide a further visual stimulus and encourage pupils' sense of pride in their achievement. Staff and non-teaching assistants make good use of practical areas between classrooms to extend group working.
34. The quality and use of day-to-day assessment are satisfactory. Good sessions in mental mathematics help pupils to recognise and correct their mistakes successfully. However, although good questioning techniques are used in other lessons to assess progress, teachers do not always harness the knowledge gained to set pupils targets for their learning. The quality of marking is variable. The majority of work is marked well, with evaluative comments to help pupils understand how to improve their work, but other work is marked just with ticks and crosses. Teachers make satisfactory use of homework, although not all plans clearly identify homework being checked with pupils in class.

### **The curriculum and assessment**

35. The curriculum for children under five is sufficiently broad, balanced and relevant to their stage of development. The areas of learning are supported satisfactorily by activities that enhance children's social, intellectual and physical development. Staff work well together to plan a balanced programme that meets the needs of the children, and prepares them well for the National Curriculum programmes of study. However, staff do not yet plan equally carefully for an outdoor curriculum, and they do not make explicit the link between the early years' curriculum and the National Curriculum.

36. The curriculum at Key Stages 1 and 2 is broad and balanced. It meets statutory requirements at both key stages and includes all required subjects, although provision for information technology is unsatisfactory. Religious education is based appropriately on the locally agreed syllabus, and satisfactory provision is made for both sex and drugs education. There is clear allocation of time for English and mathematics, and both the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies are beginning to be used effectively. Good use is made of discretionary and extra-curricular time, by enriching the curriculum, for example, with conversation and singing in French. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education.
37. Clear policies for all subjects are in place, although many of these are due for review. Schemes of work are not in place for all subjects, for example, physical education. This was also pointed out in the previous inspection report. However, whilst existing schemes ensure that the content of the National Curriculum is covered, they do not give guidance on the level of work to be expected from each year group. As a result the sequence of skills and understanding to be gained as pupils progress through the school is insecure, and this hinders progress. This was a key issue in the last inspection report which has not been addressed.
38. The school does not have a clear and simple overview to show the content of topics covered by each year group. As a result, the systematic delivery of the curriculum, to develop pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding, cannot be monitored easily. Medium-term planning for topics is satisfactory. Most teachers make good use of the weekly planning frameworks provided by the National Numeracy and Literacy Strategies to identify what pupils need to learn, and to plan different activities for pupils with differing abilities in English and mathematics. However, short-term planning for other subjects is unsatisfactory. It does not always give sufficient detail of what children are expected to learn and seldom indicates activities for pupils of differing abilities. Opportunities for assessing pupils' progress in order to inform the next stage of learning are not identified. Consequently, the work planned does not always meet the needs of all the pupils in the class, or take into account what has been learnt before.
39. The curriculum is equally accessible to all pupils, and the attainment of different groups, such as boys and girls, is closely monitored. Pupils with special educational needs receive very good quality support in separate sessions that enhance their access to the full National Curriculum very effectively. The support they receive in mainstream classes is usually effective in ensuring that they have equal access to the full curriculum. The school meets the requirements for the Code of Practice for special educational needs well. There are good systems and practices in place for identifying, monitoring and reviewing the progress of these pupils.
40. The curriculum is enriched by an excellent range of extra-curricular activities such as country dancing, music, drama, art, chess, French and football. These make a very positive contribution to the quality of learning in the school. Pupils enjoy considerable success in competitive sports, and their musical and artistic endeavours, both at home and abroad, are regularly reported in the local press. In addition, residential visits to the Isle of Wight and France very effectively enhance the personal, social and cultural development of all of the pupils
41. The school has a sound system for assessing children under five. It begins as soon as



they join the reception classes and parents contribute to the initial identification of skills. The school meets requirements for using a recognised baseline assessment procedure well, and staff supplement this with regular observations of children's progress. They make good use of these procedures, both in developing relationships with parents, and in targeting children, to develop specific skills and enhance their understanding.

42. Current assessment and recording procedures are of limited use, and are inconsistently applied, which is unsatisfactory. This was a key issue in the last inspection report which has not been resolved. The school's overall assessment policy is being revised in order to provide better systems for assessing and recording pupils' attainment and progress, and new ideas are being piloted in one year group. The baseline assessment which takes place as soon as children enter the school is used to assess pupils' progress during Key Stage 1. However, the tracking of individual pupils' progress throughout the school is at an early stage of development. Teachers know their pupils very well, and use this knowledge to assess pupils' work during lessons, but there are few formal systems in place to ensure that assessment is used to plan the next stage of learning. There is no agreed system for keeping records of assessments of day-to-day work, and practice varies considerably between teachers. As a result, work is not always planned to build upon what pupils already know, understand and can do. There are no portfolios containing clearly assessed examples of pupils' work to assist teachers by giving them an accurate and clear understanding of the levels of work to be expected from pupils in each year group. As a result, teachers' expectations of the work to be carried out by individuals and groups of pupils are not always appropriate or consistent. All teachers, however, keep detailed reading records in order to show pupils' progress through the reading scheme.
43. Realistic targets are being set to improve attainment in the standardised tests for different groups of pupils by the end of each key stage. However, targets are not yet in place to enable individuals to improve their personal attainment as they progress through the school. The marking policy is applied inconsistently, and not all teachers write good, evaluative comments to help pupils improve their work. Pupils' reports do not always give a clear account of what work has been covered, for example in religious education, or set targets for future development.

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

44. The school's positive ethos effectively supports the good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, including those who are under five. This remains a strength of the school as reported at the last inspection. Social skills and moral values are encouraged through daily lessons and all assemblies, and are promoted well by visits from the local minister, the school nurse and the police.
45. Children under five have sound opportunities to develop spiritually, for example, by appreciating the wonder of nature, whether through spontaneous opportunities such as gazing at a dragonfly, or planned opportunities to observe hyacinths and tadpoles. However, staff do not specifically anticipate these opportunities in their planning. Provision for moral development, in the reception classes, is good. Staff consistently provide good guidance to support children's understanding of right and wrong. Provision for their social and cultural development is good as they learn to work and play together harmoniously, and be tolerant of individual differences.

46. Provision for pupils' spiritual development, at Key Stages 1 and 2, is good. The school positively promotes qualities such as compassion, dignity and empathy. In science, pupils are amazed when they realise how much blood their heart pumps around their body every day. In history, they develop a good sense of empathy when they discuss famous characters such as Florence Nightingale. Pupils successfully express their feelings, through art, when listening to music such as Beethoven's Fifth Symphony. However, teachers sometimes miss opportunities to promote spirituality, as they do not consciously plan to include this aspect within lessons. Collective worship is carefully planned and meets statutory requirements. Times for reflection are included both in assemblies and in class, and a candle is often lit so that pupils can focus their attention whilst saying a personal prayer. The school successfully embraces other religious beliefs, such as Judaism. Assemblies are also a time for celebrating personal achievement and pupils are quick to congratulate their peers. In some classes, pupils have time to discuss their own feelings, for example in circle time, though this is not yet planned systematically throughout the school. The co-ordinator is well aware of the few shortcomings in the provision for spiritual development and has prepared a paper for discussion by the staff.
47. Provision for pupils' moral development is good. It permeates the curriculum, and pupils of all ages are well aware of what is right and wrong, although a few do not always react appropriately. Overall, pupils have positive attitudes to good behaviour. The school successfully fosters qualities such as truthfulness and honesty. When personal items go missing, for example, pupils are made fully aware of how upset the owners can become. The school's aims positively promote pupils' good behaviour through a strong moral code. However, there is a lack of opportunity for pupils to extend and develop their ideas through debate and discussion.
48. Provision for pupils' social development is very good. They relate well to each other and show considerable respect. They play well together and do not interfere in other pupils' games and activities, for example, when playing playground chess. Older pupils have many opportunities to develop their social skills when they represent the school in sports teams. Pupils make regular visits to France. They enjoy both hosting, and staying with, French families, and this has a very positive impact on their social and cultural development. Pupils have good opportunities to develop their social skills within the community when they dance, for example, at the church fete and when the choir sings for senior citizens. They take responsibilities seriously, for example, collecting registers, and older pupils look after younger ones on occasions. Older pupils show initiative in ensuring that the school grounds remain neat and attractive, by watering the plants, weeding the Quiet Area and tidying the physical education equipment.
49. The school makes good provision for pupils' cultural development. In addition to the visits to France, the school organises a wide range of visits to places of local and national interest, which contributes positively to pupils' understanding of their own culture. Pupils, for example, regularly go to the local heritage centre and good use is made of the town's Tudor architecture to support history lessons. In order to raise pupils' multi-cultural awareness, there has been a recent visit from an Indian dance group, who worked closely with the pupils in Year 5. The school is aware that this aspect is not always given sufficient attention throughout the curriculum, as noted in the last report. Consequently, it has recently appointed a co-ordinator with responsibility for promoting multi-cultural development.

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

50. The school is very successful in providing a caring and supportive environment for pupils, with which parents are very satisfied. Pastoral care is one of the school's great strengths.
51. Procedures for monitoring pupils' personal development are satisfactory. Teachers know their pupils well and are aware of the problems they face outside the school environment. Those with special educational or other needs are well supported and outside agencies, for example, the mainstream speech and language service, are fully involved. The school plans carefully for pupils' personal development within the curriculum. Pupils are taught about environmental issues and a lively discussion ensued when, for example, a Year 5 class discussed safety on the road, with pupils offering radical penalties, such as cutting off the hands of those who drive too fast. By the time they leave the school, pupils have developed a good sense of natural justice and an awareness of citizenship. However, the tracking of individual pupils' progress throughout the school is unsatisfactory. Teachers use their knowledge of their pupils to assess work during lessons, but assessment is not consistently used to plan the next stage of learning.
52. The school has very good procedures to promote good behaviour and to monitor any incidents. The detailed, positive behaviour policy and sensible sanctions are clearly understood by all members of the school community, and are consistently implemented by all members of staff. Pupils are actively encouraged to take responsibility for their own behaviour.
53. Very good procedures are in place to promote good attendance and to follow up any absence. Registers are called twice a day, completed correctly and monitored regularly by the headteacher. If parents or carers have not informed the school why their child is absent they are telephoned during the morning. Punctuality overall is good. The few latecomers are well known and their arrival does not disrupt teaching time. When necessary, the education welfare officer will always respond to any request from the school.
54. Procedures for promoting pupils' health and wellbeing are good. Child protection procedures are well known to all staff and regularly timetabled for discussion at their meetings. Links and liaison with local agencies are good. The headteacher, as designated teacher, has been trained fully. The school has many detailed health and safety policies to cover all eventualities. Regular risk assessments take place and an independent health and safety audit is carried out annually. Many of the staff have been trained in first aid, and practice is satisfactory. The school was, however, advised of a number of health and safety matters. For example, the condition of the mobile hut containing the toilets is poor; the paint is peeling badly and the flooring is damaged, which could cause pupils to trip. Storage of school bags and coats also needs attention.

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

55. The school has a good partnership with parents and very good links with the local and wider community. Parents are extremely supportive of the school. They value the welcoming atmosphere and share the school's aims for their children. Valuable links with parents are established from the very beginning, through the '3+ club'. This weekly

club provides children and parents with a gradual and useful introduction to the school. Reception class teachers invite parents to participate in an initial review of what their child can do, providing a positive start to the partnership between school and home.

56. Parents' involvement in their children's learning is good. They help in any way they can and are closely involved in their children's lives at school. Some assist in classrooms, whilst others act as hosts to the French children who take part in competitions with the school. Others help with the excellent range of extra-curricular activities. Bulb planting is an annual event, and parents have helped create the Quiet Area and developed the environmental part of the field. All the interesting and sometimes dramatic murals have been painted by a dedicated band of parents, who are now creating a circus-feel to the infant end corridor. Their children are proud of their environment.
57. Governors and parents successfully organise the collection of supermarket vouchers at their places of work to supplement the school's information technology resources. The enthusiastic 'PFTA' run well-supported fund-raising events to provide the school with extra equipment and money. They have been successful in obtaining grants to fund the outdoor play equipment. The elderly, ex-pupils (aged 65 plus), the town's community and children from Faversham's twin town in France enjoy performances given by the school's music and drama and morris/country dance groups.
58. The quality of information for parents is good overall. The school prospectus is attractive and well-written governors' annual reports provide parents with all statutory information. News and other letters are sent out regularly by pupil post, and parents are informed about, for example, the homework policy and literacy sessions. They were consulted appropriately on the home-school agreement. However the comprehensive annual reports, which parents like and on which most comment, are not sufficiently specific about what pupils have learnt or how they have progressed, and teachers do not always indicate areas where pupils might improve.
59. Attendance at parents' consultation meetings is excellent, and further appointments are offered if parents cannot attend the dates first offered. Parents are free to speak to teachers at other times if they have immediate concerns. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are invited to discuss their children's individual education plans, although not all attend review meetings. Most help their children with homework, although not all agree that young children should be given it.
60. The flourishing links with the local community and schools abroad, reported at the time of the last inspection, continue. The school is very much part of the community, and the grounds and buildings are used for school clubs, in which many teachers are involved. The choir will be singing the music co-ordinator's own composition as part of the Millennium celebrations at the local church. The locality is well used to enhance the curriculum and regular visitors include the local minister, the school nurse, parents and grandparents and representatives from the fire service and charities. Educational visits are made to Dover and London as well as to more local places, and the links with French schools play an important part in pupils' lives. These enhance pupils' experience and have a very positive impact on their achievements and their personal development.

## 60. **The management and efficiency of the school**

### **Leadership and management**

61. The school has made progress in addressing some of the key issues raised by the previous inspection, but deficiencies remain in important areas. Overall progress has been unsatisfactory. The school has successfully addressed the issue of raising levels of attainment. These have risen steadily year-on-year in the end of key stage standard assessment tasks since the previous inspection. Teaching in ability groups for English and mathematics in Years 5 and 6 has had a positive impact on addressing the needs of more able pupils. The school's curriculum provides pupils with a broad range of learning experiences, which is particularly good in relation to the arts. Opportunities for investigative work have improved, except in mathematics. However, levels of attainment are still not related to the National Curriculum programmes of study. A useful assessment policy has not been established and assessment is not well used. Management roles have been reviewed and distributed more equitably, but the implementation of these roles is significantly under-developed. Many of the minor issues raised in the previous report have been addressed, although there is still unsatisfactory use of information technology across the curriculum, and there is still no scheme of work for physical education.
62. The school has suffered considerable problems in relation to staffing, which, together with severe budget constraints, have had a significant impact on this lack of progress. For example, the deputy headteacher and assessment co-ordinator and the co-ordinator for special educational needs have both had long-term sickness, and subsequently retired. Additionally, the growth in size of the school has not been properly reflected in the devolution of management structures. The school recognises these deficiencies, and most issues form a key part of the school development plan. The school is in a satisfactory position to improve in the future. A new deputy headteacher, with responsibility for assessment, has been appointed, and he has detailed plans ready to be implemented. The management structure is in place, although the headteacher acknowledges that individual roles need a tighter focus.
63. The leadership and management of the school are satisfactory overall. The school is well led by the headteacher, who provides caring and committed leadership, with a significant focus on the pastoral care of the pupils. He is well supported by staff and governors, and relationships throughout the school are good. Teachers are committed to achieving high standards and providing pupils with a broad and challenging range of experiences, and take an active part in extra-curricular activities to extend these. The work of the school is supported positively by the vast majority of parents. The school's aims and values are implemented well and the ethos of the school is good.
64. There are good relationships between the school and its governing body. The chair of governors is a regular visitor and gives positive support to the headteacher. Other governors visit as often as their commitments allow and regular, planned visits are reported in detail to the governing body. Governors bring a useful degree of expertise to the school. This is well matched to their responsibilities and they have good access to training to keep up-to-date with educational developments. The governing body has an appropriate committee structure. The work of the school is monitored mainly through these committees, for example, presentations from staff to the curriculum committee.

The information gained is fed back to the full governing body at regular meetings. Governors fulfil their statutory responsibilities satisfactorily.

65. The growth of the school in recent years has necessitated a review of the senior management team structure. Individual roles and responsibilities for managing and monitoring the curriculum have been allocated but are not yet fully defined. Few co-ordinators have written action plans for the development of their areas of responsibility. Consequently, the school does not have a clear overview of the planning and delivery of the curriculum. Teachers' plans are seen on an ad-hoc basis by co-ordinators and members of the senior management team, but curriculum coverage and the progressive development of pupils' skills and knowledge are not secure. The monitoring of the standards attained in the school is under-developed. Pupils' work is not regularly seen by the headteacher, subject co-ordinators or the staff as a whole. There are no portfolios of assessed work in different subjects to provide exemplars of good practice. This limits the school's ability to see variations in expectations and standards throughout the school.
66. Monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning is informal. The headteacher makes regular class visits, and has a satisfactory picture of the strengths and weaknesses in the quality of education in the school. Together with the Key Stage 1 co-ordinator, he has made some formal visits and reported back on these, but their frequency is insufficient. Plans are in place to provide co-ordinators with time to implement this element of their role, but had to be suspended as a result of staff absence in the past year.
67. The special educational needs co-ordinator provides very effective leadership for the special educational needs provision. The work of the team of learning support assistants is very well directed, and they are very efficiently deployed to provide a programme of separate sessions to meet pupils' individual targets. The current co-ordinator has begun to develop expertise within the learning support team. The very good management of this provision makes a significant contribution to the good progress of pupils with special educational needs. The early years co-ordinator provides effective leadership for the provision for children under five, and this contributes to the good progress made by children in most areas of learning.
68. The school development plan is a useful document, drawn up in consultation with staff and governors. It provides a clear overview of areas to be addressed each term and a rolling programme of curriculum review. Key targets for Autumn 1999 include home-school liaison, the introduction of the Numeracy Hour, setting up a literacy support programme, creating a policy for investigational work and a review of the physical education policy, amongst others. It includes appropriate targets and key tasks in each area, with clear success criteria, the personnel, resources and time needed. However, it does not include an evaluation of success, or otherwise, in meeting targets, which limits its overall value in monitoring the development of the school.

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

69. The school is fully staffed with appropriately qualified teachers, whose responsibilities are well matched to their qualifications and experience. Classroom and learning support assistants provide very valuable support. There is an excellent programme of in-service training for learning support assistants which ensures that they are very well placed to

support the pupils that they are working with. Newly-qualified teachers are well supported through the comprehensive induction programme, and an effective appraisal system is in place for teachers, learning support assistants and administrative staff. In-service training is appropriately linked to priorities identified in the school development plan, and courses attended are graded for the headteacher and shared at regular meetings, held for all members of staff.

70. Accommodation at the school is satisfactory. It provides an interesting range of styles, from the Victorian building with 1960s' additions, to the mobile huts. The mobiles, however, are old, and, due to the rapid expansion in the school's population, some of the classrooms are too cramped to allow carpet time. A specialist room used by both pupils and staff enhances the provision for pupils with special educational needs. The school hall is large enough for the whole school to assemble together, but there is limited room for other specialist areas, apart from separate libraries for Key Stages 1 and 2. The infant library has been attractively transformed to resemble part of a boat, complete with mast, and is much enjoyed by those who use it. Parents have used their artistic talents to brighten the buildings, for example, creating an underwater feel to the junior entrance, outside the assembly hall. Extensive displays of pupils' work, particularly in art, enhance the learning environment and make a positive contribution to pupils' sense of pride in their achievements. The school, however, recognises that the reception classrooms are spacious but gloomy, and has plans for much-needed refurbishment.
71. Very extensive, attractive and well-kept grounds make a positive contribution to pupils' education, with ample space for football and other team games. The school has its own swimming pool which is securely enclosed by a high wire fence. The large hard-surfaced areas are well marked for playground games, and the award-winning Quiet Area is appreciated by those who use it. Reception class children enjoy their own enclosed play area. At the far end of one field is an attractive and interesting environmental area, created with the help of parents and cared for by pupils.
72. The school overall has satisfactory resources for all subjects and these are generally readily accessible to teachers. Resources are good for English, art, music and physical education, although a few of the mats are worn, with loose tape. Resources for literacy are very good. There is a good range of reading material including 'Big Books' and sets of story books which are of good quality and easily accessible in the literacy resource area. The school has a very wide range of dictionaries and thesauruses that are used appropriately together with a selection of poetry books. The school uses a mixture of reading schemes so that books can be matched effectively to pupils' levels of attainment and understanding. There are satisfactory resources for numeracy, science and religious education, although there are insufficient resources to support pupils' preparation for life in Britain's diverse, contemporary society. Resources for information technology are generally good and new computers are waiting to be installed to supplement these. Special educational needs resources are very good, but those for children under five are barely satisfactory. Whilst there are sufficient resources to support the early years curriculum, many are faded, worn and rather shabby. The resources generally are not sufficiently visually stimulating to compensate for children's lack of expressive skills and curiosity. The school libraries are unsatisfactory. They contain a large number of books, especially reference books, which are old and out of date, and are of little use to pupils when they do individual research.

## **The efficiency of the school**

72.

73. As detailed in the last inspection report, the school manages its finances very well. The governors continue to be closely involved in the setting and monitoring of the budget. However, there has not been an external audit since before the last inspection in 1996.

74. The headteacher, in conjunction with the office manager, carefully prepares a range of budget options which are submitted to the governors. These take full account of fixed costs, the priorities in the school development plan and the resource requirements of staff. The governors' finance committee meets regularly. It considers the proposals carefully, including long-term costs such as a decoration programme, before taking an agreed budget to the full governing body for approval. The headteacher and the finance committee have realistic virement and spending limits that have been agreed by the governing body. However, although the governors monitor the school's development carefully, they do not have a formal means of monitoring the cost-effectiveness of their decisions or their impact on standards.

75. The agreed deficit noted in the last report has now been cleared through a programme of prudent spending, and the school had a small surplus at the end of the last financial year. This has been supplemented through the return to the school's budget of excess sums that had previously been debited, for example, for maternity and sickness allowances. This has led to a considerable budget surplus in the current financial year. It has been sensibly earmarked for projects such as the redevelopment of the libraries and the development of an information and communication technology suite, to enhance the quality of pupils' learning.

76. The day-to-day financial administration is very good. The office manager monitors all spending on a daily basis and this is checked regularly by the headteacher and the clerical assistant. The chair of the governors' finance committee receives monthly budget print-outs which are carefully monitored against the agreed budget. Specific grants such as those for special educational needs and in-service training are spent appropriately and are accounted for properly. The budget is well supplemented by additional sums raised by the parents' association, which have recently been used to develop playground equipment and markings, such as the giant chess set. These additional resources, for which the school is grateful, effectively enhance pupils' learning and social development.

77. Teachers are well qualified, have a wide range of expertise and are deployed effectively. Classroom assistants are used very efficiently to support pupils' learning, especially that of those with special educational needs. The accommodation is used well including the extensive outdoor areas, for example, to develop orienteering skills. Resources are generally used effectively, although the libraries contain many books that are out of date and are not helpful for pupils researching for information, or for enhancing their literacy skills.

78. The school has not successfully addressed all the issues raised in the last report. However, taking into account the average unit costs, the steady rise in standards, especially at Key Stage 2, the positive ethos, the good provision for pupils with special educational needs, who represent over half of the school, and the high standards of behaviour; the school continues to give good value for money.



## 78. **PART B: CURRICULUM AREAS AND SUBJECTS**

### 78. **Areas of learning for children under five**

79. Most children who join the reception classes have little experience of expressing themselves, and several have additional speech difficulties. Understandably this has an adverse effect on many aspects of their development.
80. The high quality of teaching and relationships combine to make a significant contribution to the good progress that children make in personal and social development, language and literacy, mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world and creative development. However, in spite of this, the extent of their expressive difficulties means that most children are unlikely to attain the levels expected for their age, by the time they are five, in these areas of learning. Children attain the expected levels and make satisfactory progress in physical development.

#### **Personal and social development**

81. Overall, most children are unlikely to attain expectations fully for their age in personal and social development. Although they increasingly express an emotional response through gesture or facial expression, most children do not express a range of feelings or initiate ideas to the extent expected for their age. Children work peacefully alongside each other and share equipment without argument, but most do not use their experience to co-operate with each other. A few children try to voice an idea or share an experience but they seldom receive a response from another child that develops the exchange. This lack of expression significantly restricts the quality of children's relationships. Children in the reception classes behave very well. They quickly learn to conform to the requirements of working together in large and small groups. They take turns harmoniously and listen carefully to adults. They concentrate well and are patient when activities do not totally engage their interest. When they have the opportunity to select an activity, they do so purposefully.
82. All staff in the reception classes share a very good understanding of how to meet children's emotional and learning needs. The strength of the early years' provision lies in the team approach and the quality of relationships between children and staff. Teachers and classroom assistants provide familiar routines that effectively support children's sense of security. They clearly communicate consistent expectations that are highly effective in supporting children's social development. Staff use books and daily activities to provide the opportunity for children to respond emotionally. Consequently, children make good progress in participating in a range of experiences and expressing their enjoyment of these.

#### **Language and literacy**

83. Children's attainment overall in language and literacy is below expectations for their age. In play situations, such as the home corner, most children want to communicate with each other, but they do not explain their ideas in words to the extent expected for their age. Many children do not offer ideas spontaneously and so conversations between them are very limited. While they respond to adult questions willingly, most children are dependent upon single word or short phrase answers. When they make models with

construction materials, sitting alongside each other on the carpet, they usually concentrate and work silently. They do not provide a running commentary to their own activity, nor do they usually chat to each other. A few children ask each other questions in this situation, but with limited vocabulary, such as 'How many is your Dad?' in an enquiry about age, and they receive little response.

84. Children make a good start to enjoying books and listening to stories. Most children understand how a book works, that the title is on the front and that print carries meaning. They successfully distinguish between print and pictures and appreciate that the illustrations carry clues to the meaning of the words. They enjoy rhymes, for example, when they share a big book, 'The Shark' they repeat the words 'fin' and 'grin' enthusiastically with the teacher. During the inspection one group of children enjoyed being introduced to the rhyme, '1,2,3,4,5 Once I caught a fish alive', but their appreciation was communicated largely by facial expression. A minority of children try to relate stories to their own experience, but many of these children have immature and indistinct speech.
85. Most children start in the reception classes with limited experience of using pencils and crayons. However, children are interested in making marks on paper. In the home corner they use the paper and pencils to make linear marks, but initially the shapes that they produce bear little resemblance to the curves of letters and cursive script that are common in play writing for their age. They make very good progress in forming letters, and most children are likely to make a reasonable attempt at writing their own name before their fifth birthday. In this element of literacy skills, most children are close to expectations for their age by the age of five.
86. The teaching of language and literacy skills is good in most lessons. All staff place a suitable emphasis upon these skills, and provide good role models. They are skilled at asking questions that have more than one answer and they consistently value what children say. Suitable activities are provided to support language and literacy development and staff make considerable efforts with the limited resources available to them to provide an attractive and stimulating learning environment. However, there are insufficient bright and colourful resources to help staff compensate for the children's lack of expressive skills, capture their imagination and spur them to express themselves more readily and frequently.

## **Mathematics**

87. Overall, in spite of good progress, most children are unlikely to meet expected levels of mathematical understanding fully by the time that they are five. Most children are interested in shape and make good progress in identifying shapes soon after starting in the reception classes. A few children develop and use mathematical language to demonstrate that their understanding of number extends to the idea of simple addition. However, most children do not express an understanding of the ideas of addition and subtraction in their day-to-day language. Few children spontaneously use vocabulary that relates to size and position such as 'altogether'. Teachers and support staff successfully teach children to count, and to recognise and write numerals. Children who are new to the reception classes enjoy correcting a duck puppet that miscounts three bricks. Teaching techniques, such as the use of the puppet, are highly successful in engaging children's interest and encouraging them to identify the best strategies for accurate counting. In this element of this area of learning most children are likely to

meet expectations for their age by the time they are five.

88. The teaching of mathematics is mostly very good, occasionally good and never less than satisfactory. All staff place a suitably high emphasis on mathematical skills by providing good opportunities for children to count, understand number, quantity and size, and to categorise and recognise shapes. All staff are skilled at providing opportunities to reinforce counting and at using mathematical language throughout the day in various activities. However, staff do not plan sufficiently to support mathematical understanding through outdoor activities.

### **Knowledge and understanding of the world**

89. Most children are unlikely to meet fully the expected attainment levels for their age in all aspects of knowledge and understanding of the world. In spite of the good progress that children make in this area of learning, their language skills significantly affect this aspect of their development.
90. During role play, most children demonstrate a satisfactory understanding of everyday activities such as washing up, ironing and posting letters. However, while a few children talk about their families, pets and journeys to school, very few volunteer any information of their own accord. A few children experiment with equipment, for example, testing to see whether a 'walking dog' travels faster on a steeper slope. However, most children lack the curiosity associated with their age, and the reception classes' resources are not sufficiently bright and exciting to overcome this fully. Children seldom ask questions about how things work although a few try to ask questions of adults or peers about their experiences. They recall yesterday's activities and willingly respond to adult questions about them, but seldom refer back to past events spontaneously. Most children enjoy sitting at the computer and using the keyboard while they watch shapes appear on the screen. However, only a minority of children use the keyboard to control the image on the screen and actively match the shapes.
91. Children understand that materials change when they are combined, for example, when they mix fat and seeds to make 'bird pudding', or that they change further with heat, when they make individual Christmas cakes. They experiment, with serious concentration, to see which objects float and which sink in a water tank. In the spring they enjoy watching hyacinths and tadpoles grow, and record their observations satisfactorily in pictures.
92. There is an equal amount of good and satisfactory teaching in this area of learning. Most children are socially reserved when they join the reception class and they make good progress in finding their way around the accommodation because staff provide a well-organised environment. Children quickly learn where equipment belongs because they participate in tidying routines. Staff provide a satisfactory range of experiences to increase children's understanding of the world around them, and work very hard to generate discussion with children as they participate in the activities.

92.

### **Physical development**

93. Children's physical development is satisfactory. When children join the reception classes they enjoy using their strength to manipulate construction equipment. Most children join pieces together effectively and they develop manipulative skills that are

appropriate for their age. They handle malleable material competently and enthusiastically. They use scissors effectively to cut pictures from magazines. Although most children are not yet cutting with the degree of precision and accuracy expected for their age, it is likely that the majority will reach expected levels by the time they are five.

94. Children make sound progress with physical skills overall. They use paintbrushes and pencils competently and with increasing control. In the hall they use space well and travel around the hall by running, jumping or skipping very confidently. They are likely to reach expected levels in co-ordination skills and physical development by the age of five. Lessons in the hall introduce children to the levels of balance and control expected at the beginning of the National Curriculum. Teaching in the only movement lesson observed during the inspection was very good. Teachers and classroom assistants provide good opportunities for children to develop manipulative skills and sound opportunities for them to develop large movement skills. There is, however, a lack of large wheeled equipment for children under five to support both physical and social development.

### **Creative development**

95. Children are unlikely to attain the levels expected for their age in all aspects of their creative development. Although children make good progress in using their imaginations, for example in the home corner, they do not share and develop imaginative ideas as much as is expected for their age. Whilst they select a role in the play-house, such as 'mummy', 'daddy' or 'baby', most children do not develop a 'story' as they play.
96. Children have sufficient suitable opportunities to be creative. They have regular access to imaginative play equipment as well as paint and craft materials. They produce bold and colourful paintings and use good observational skills to produce observational drawings of winter trees. However, most children start in the reception classes with significant difficulties in expressing themselves linguistically and there are insufficient imaginative and stimulating resources to provide a good level of compensation for these difficulties. Staff work very hard to use the available resources to provide experiences that support children's language skills. For example, they provide a sensory activity with pots of different smelling materials such as lavender and coffee, and accompany this with specific relevant vocabulary. However, the teaching of creative development is very dependent upon resources and so teaching for this area of learning is satisfactory overall.

### **96. English, mathematics and science Information technology and religious education**

#### **English**

97. Attainment in English is below average by the end of both key stages. This is largely due to the high number of pupils in all classes who have special educational needs. The 1998 end of Key Stage 1 tests show a dip in standards, particularly in reading, but this is accounted for by a significantly higher number of pupils with special educational needs

in this cohort of pupils. The 1999 end of Key Stage 1 tests show that a higher percentage of pupils attained Level 2 both in reading and writing than in the previous year. In the 1998 end of Key Stage 2 tests, standards overall were below average when compared with schools nationally but were above average when compared to similar schools. This reflects the steady rise in standards over the past three years, and the small, but significant, number of pupils attaining the higher Level 5. This steady rise continues in the end of Key Stage 2 tests in 1999, although standards would appear to have declined since the last inspection, where they were reported as being similar to the national average.

98. Progress throughout both key stages, including that for pupils with special educational needs, is satisfactory overall, and this is reflected in the steady improvement over time in standards at Key Stage 2. The school, for example, places appropriate emphasis on the development of phonics; most pupils in Year 1 know their initial letter sounds, many recognise simple phonemes, and, by the end of Key Stage 2, pupils use this knowledge to build unknown words. The Literacy Hour is having a positive impact on attainment and progress throughout the school, although aspects such as shared reading are under-developed, especially at Key Stage 2. Teachers give more attention to the development of grammatical skills and the use of language. For example, in a Year 3 class, pupils know the impact of the use of alliteration in their writing. The school also gives additional time for the development of extended writing and this is having a positive impact on progress. In Year 2, for example, at this early stage in the year more able pupils use capital letters and full stops correctly and all pupils, including those with special educational needs, communicate their ideas successfully. They make sound progress throughout Key Stage 2 and, by Year 6, pupils edit and draft their work knowledgeably, both for punctuation and spelling.
99. At both key stages pupils' listening skills are good, as indicated in the last report. They listen carefully to instructions and concentrate well in most lessons. In the Literacy Hour, for example, Year 2 pupils listen attentively to the story of the 'Bad Tempered Ladybird' during shared reading and join in appropriately. Teachers have very few interruptions during individual group work, as pupils are clear about the tasks they are expected to complete. Very occasionally, however, when teachers' expectations are not appropriate their attention wanders and they do not listen to each other or to what they are being told. Speaking skills are less well-developed overall. Many pupils enter school with unsatisfactory levels of attainment in speaking and it is very difficult to understand what some of the younger ones are saying. The school is well aware of this and a significant number receive additional help through speech therapy. Whilst the school works hard to improve pupils' speech, teachers do not always provide appropriate opportunities for them to develop their speaking skills, especially in Key Stage 2. There are too few occasions, for example, for pupils to enter into debate and discussion or to engage in creative speaking, and teachers tend to engage in instruction and explanation during lessons rather than use effective questioning techniques.
100. Standards in reading for the majority of pupils are generally satisfactory at both key stages and are similar to those at the last inspection. However, due to the high number of pupils with special educational needs, despite progress being sound, standards are below average overall by the end of Key Stage 2. The school encourages pupils to enjoy books, for example, by providing additional reading time outside the Literacy Hour, and the majority are enthusiastic readers. Both boys and girls make sound progress in reading as they move through the school. They develop good strategies for building

unknown words through the use of phonics and by using the context of the story at both key stages. By the end of Key Stage 1, the more able readers read reasonably fluently and generally correct their mistakes. The less able, although finding reading difficult, recognise several words and use picture cues successfully to follow a story. By the end of Key Stage 2, the more able readers are fluent and read aloud with good expression and many draw inferences from the story, such as the importance of treating all people equally. They make appropriate comparisons between authors and their styles of writing. Most, except for the least able, confidently locate a non-fiction book in the library and successfully use the contents and index pages.

101. Standards in writing vary considerably throughout the school, due to the wide range of pupils' attainment, but overall standards are below average. In the Literacy Hour, for example, just under a half of all pupils' work is at levels below those expected for their age, such as in Year 6 where some are doing work that would normally be expected to be completed in Year 4. The school's commitment to raising standards, through grouping pupils according to ability in Years 5 and 6 and by providing additional time for extended writing outside the Literacy Hour, is having a positive impact on progress. Where guided writing is taught effectively this is also having a positive impact on standards. Many pupils begin work in the National Curriculum unable to write clearly. By the end of Key Stage 1, the contrast between the more able and those with special educational needs is significant. The more able are writing in simple sentences and use capital letters and full stops appropriately. Monosyllabic words are usually spelt correctly and often chosen for effect, for example, in Year 2 in stories about 'Bottled Dreams' and writing about a visit to the churchyard. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils write in a variety of styles, for example preparing informative 'tourist booklets' about different places such as the Lake District, using information from CD ROM and, in science, writing about experiments. Pupils in Year 5 write their own plays developing the use of direct speech with reasonable success, based on familiar stories such as the Pied Piper. Standards in handwriting are improving. The school has recently modified its handwriting scheme. By the end of Key Stage 1, the majority of pupils are beginning to use cursive script. However, a significant number of less able pupils still print and not always legibly. By the end of Key Stage 2, most pupils write neatly and legibly, although a small number still revert to printing on occasions. However, information technology, for example for word processing, is not used efficiently to support pupils' writing skills.
102. Boys and girls enjoy their lessons and they nearly always settle quickly to work. Most react positively to the structure of the Literacy Hour and remain on task. Pupils concentrate well during group work and teachers have very few interruptions. When questioned, pupils respond well and are keen to answer, for example, in a Year 2 lesson when a teacher had deliberately misspelt words when teaching different phonemes. One pupil became so involved that when mistakes were corrected he said 'Silly Mrs.....'.
103. The quality of teaching is good or better in 52 per cent of lessons, and this is reflected in the steady rise in attainment at Key Stage 2. Very good teaching was seen in 26 per cent of lessons, and only one unsatisfactory lesson was seen. The National Literacy Strategy is having a positive impact on the quality of teaching and learning in the school. Lessons have clearly stated objectives and are clearly focused. The structure of the Literacy Hour effectively ensures that most lessons are well paced and that tasks provide the appropriate challenge for pupils with different levels of attainment. Pupils with special educational needs are well provided for through the use of very well-

informed classroom assistants, who provide additional support both in lessons and for individuals. Those who have most difficulty are sensibly withdrawn for sections of a lesson and are given work at the appropriate level. Reading records are kept carefully for pupils who are following the reading scheme. Assessment however, is not consistent; too much is dependent on individual teachers and it is difficult to monitor individual pupils' progress. The quality of marking varies considerably from teacher to teacher and ranges from helpful, constructive comments to merely ticks and crosses.

## Mathematics

104. Standards of attainment in mathematics are average by the end of Key Stage 1. This reflects a similar picture to that found by the previous inspection in 1996. In 1998, standard assessment test results were very low for pupils reaching Level 2, and below average for pupils attaining the higher Level 3. The results were well below average compared with similar schools. The 1999 results showed a marked increase in pupils attaining Level 2 and a rise at Level 3. The pattern of performance over three years is that results have remained below the national average, but are now beginning to rise. Younger pupils estimate and measure accurately, using non-standard units, and use mathematical language correctly, for example 'estimate', 'longer' and 'shorter than'. They use increasingly large numbers successfully to examine sequences and patterns to 60 and order numbers to 100 correctly and rapidly. Pupils tell the time using whole and half-hours with confidence, and estimate with reasonable accuracy how long activities will take. Satisfactory use is beginning to be made of simple mental arithmetic, although the development of strategies for pupils to work out calculations in their heads is still under-developed.
105. By the end of Key Stage 2 standards of attainment in mathematics are average. This is similar to the picture found by the previous inspection. The introduction of the Numeracy Hour and teaching pupils in ability groups in the top two years are having a positive impact on standards, particularly in Key Stage 2. The 1998 national test results show that standards were well below the national average at Level 4 and below average at Level 5. Over the past three years, however, the results show a steady improvement in the pattern of performance of pupils in Key Stage 2. The tests in 1999 show a rise in both Levels 4 and 5, with a greater increase in the number of pupils attaining the higher Level 5. Pupils develop a good understanding of mirror images and symmetry. They correctly identify a wide range of two-dimensional shapes, and successfully learn correct mathematical language connected with shapes such as vertices and faces. Pupils develop increasingly complex problem-solving skills when dealing with money and numbers in everyday situations. They understand the place value of increasingly large numbers and apply their knowledge to calculate sums quickly and correctly. Pupils become confident in their understanding and calculation of equivalent fractions and decimals. The use of numeracy in other subjects is satisfactory, for example, when accurate graphs are drawn for science to show temperatures including those below zero, and time lines in history to reinforce the concept of time. However, there is limited attention paid to investigative work and this area of mathematics is under-developed. Overall, satisfactory use is beginning to be made of increasingly demanding mental arithmetic to learn number bonds and develop strategies for pupils to solve problems quickly and correctly in their heads. However, this area of mathematics is under-developed in some classes.
106. The majority of pupils enter the school with below average mathematical skills. They

make satisfactory progress overall in Key Stage 1 and good progress in Key Stage 2. The satisfactory progress in using and understanding mathematical vocabulary and concepts of number in Key Stage 1 lays a good foundation for more rapid progress in Key Stage 2. Overall, good use is being made of the National Numeracy Strategy to target pupils' learning and enable them to make progress. Progress in developing strategies for mental arithmetic is satisfactory, but is slower than when pupils use paper and pen for calculations. The teaching of pupils in ability groups in Years 5 and 6 is accelerating the rate of progress, as teachers focus on the needs of the particular groups. Older pupils with special educational needs benefit from this group teaching, which provides them with work matched to their abilities and enables them to make good progress.

107. Boys and girls are interested in their work and want to do it well. They enjoy the challenges set for them and concentrate on their tasks. They show a lively interest in each other's work and become enthusiastic when they are given practical activities. When required to, they work well together sharing ideas and helping each other sensibly.
108. The quality of teaching is satisfactory or better in 85 per cent of lessons. It is good or better in 65 per cent and very good in 15 per cent, but unsatisfactory in three lessons. Very good teaching is characterised by tasks which challenge and enthuse pupils. In these lessons, teachers' very good subject knowledge is used to explain points clearly and simply to promote understanding. The lessons move quickly and keep pupils interested in the work they are doing. Unsatisfactory teaching occurs when activities are not chosen to meet the needs of different groups in the class and tasks set do not match the ability of the pupils, being too hard or too easy for them. These lessons often move too slowly; pupils lose interest in their work and make little progress.
109. Teachers use the National Numeracy Strategy framework satisfactorily to help with their planning. This is generally having a positive impact on the standards and progress in mathematics throughout the school. Teachers know their pupils well, and assessment is used effectively in Years 5 and 6 to group pupils according to their needs. However, day-to-day recording of pupils' knowledge and understanding are inconsistent and dependent on individual teachers. Current assessment procedures in mathematics are not efficient for passing on information about pupils to subsequent teachers. As a result, work is not always based on pupils' previous learning, and different activities are not always given to pupils with different needs which hinders progress.

## **Science**

110. Attainment in science is average by the end of both key stages. All aspects of the subject are covered satisfactorily, and attainment in investigation has improved since the last inspection. It is the approach to investigation that results in higher standards in lessons than are indicated by the national tests and assessments. However, a significant number of pupils with special educational needs have written standards that are well below average by the end of both key stages. This affects their ability to record their work, and hence their performance in end of key stage assessment tasks.
111. Teacher assessment of pupils' attainment in science at Key Stage 1 in 1998, indicate that attainment was very low when compared with national averages. The number of more able pupils reaching the higher Level 3 was below average. When compared with



similar schools, attainment was also very low at the expected Level 2, but the percentage of pupils reaching the higher Level 3 was average. The 1999 teacher assessments in science indicate significant improvement overall in pupils' levels of attainment.

112. Attainment in the 1998 standard assessment tasks in science at the end of Key Stage 2 was also well below the national average. The number of more able pupils achieving the higher Level 5 was below the national average. Compared with similar schools, however, the results were average for those achieving the expected Level 4 and above average at the higher Level 5. The 1999 national tests and assessments indicate improved performance over the 1998 results. Trends over the past three years show a steady improvement in attainment.
113. Standards in lessons are higher than those shown by the end of key stage tests and assessments. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils investigate successfully the force exerted by two different vehicles. They understand clearly the need to make the test fair and how to achieve this, although many find it difficult to use scientific language clearly. More able pupils write good predictions and give good reasons for their observations, which make a positive contribution to their literacy skills.
114. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils have a sound understanding of the growth of microbes under different conditions. In measuring the coverage of mould on bread they make good gains in using their numeracy skills by comparing samples under different conditions. With appropriate teacher support they make their own decisions about which samples will be most affected by bacteria. Presentation of work, however, is unsatisfactory for a number of pupils with special educational needs.
115. More able pupils develop a sound understanding of the principle of changing one variable at a time. They work in small groups to solve problems linked to changing temperatures in a refrigerator and the effect of insulation on sound, using computerised information. Taking the initiative for designing the experiment and for recording results makes it possible for them to reach the higher levels of attainment, although control of the information technology is mostly in the hands of the teacher.
116. Pupils make good progress over time throughout the school. Pupils in Year 4 make very good progress in applying their knowledge of measuring and timing to an investigation of purifying water as it travels through different soil types. In Year 3, pupils make good progress in one class in understanding the importance of keeping teeth healthy by eating the right kinds of foods. However, in the parallel class, progress is unsatisfactory because the teaching does not challenge pupils and they work at too low a level for their age. Pupils in Year 5 make good progress in investigating the function of major organs and investigating their heartbeat.
117. Boys and girls respond well to good teaching and have positive attitudes to learning. In the best lessons they are enthusiastic, working very well and co-operating within groups. They enjoy practical tasks, working sensibly together. Talking with each other, they extend their learning and sustain concentration well throughout the lesson. Younger pupils in particular are confident in their approach to science. All pupils are careful when using apparatus. However, if the pace of teaching is not sustained, some become restless, losing interest and missing the key points of the lesson. In one lesson, two less able pupils became distressed by the use of inappropriate worksheets.

118. The quality of teaching is satisfactory or better in 92 per cent of lessons. It is good or better in 46 per cent and very good in 23 per cent. Unsatisfactory teaching was seen in one lesson. Lesson preparation is generally good and teachers have a good command of the subject. Good and very good teaching exemplifies the most successful features that support the raising of standards. For example, in Year 1, teachers emphasise differences between people, by allowing pupils to investigate the range of eye colour and to construct a class graph. Pupils in Year 4 improve their investigative skills, using good resources, when the teacher leads the whole class carefully and systematically through a process, whilst expecting them to develop independence. In the most successful lessons, teachers use the time when pupils are working in groups to assess their learning and extend their knowledge and understanding. This is not, however, consistent practice throughout the school. Although there are examples of good and very good teaching in a number of classrooms, the skills of literacy, numeracy and information technology are not included in teachers' plans in sufficient detail. Pupils do not always have enough opportunities to speak formally, using scientific language. In some lessons, teachers make good links between science and English. Good work in Year 4 reflects the local culture of growing and harvesting hops.

### **Information technology**

119. The previous inspection found that standards of attainment in information technology were sound. Current inspection findings show insufficient time allocated to, or emphasis placed on, information technology, either as a subject in its own right or in its application in other areas of the curriculum. Attainment by the end of both key stages is below national expectations.
120. Pupils do not naturally consider using information technology as a valuable extension of their learning in other subjects, and progress in developing their basic skills over time is unsatisfactory. There was no evidence in the scrutiny of work to show attainment and progress in the subject. Two classes had extensive displays of pupils' work. In one Year 4 class, pupils use data handling to record information from surveys and desktop publishing to produce lively newspaper reports. They word-process poems in groups and generate interesting story plans. In one Year 6 class, pupils had accessed a CD-ROM to provide information in colourful holiday brochures. However, almost all other classes had no work related to the subject, and only one class had a basic check-up list to ensure that all pupils had the opportunity to access the current program. Consequently, the development of pupils' skills and understanding is too heavily dependent on the enthusiasm of the class teacher.
121. One whole-class lesson was seen, demonstrating the functions of a word processing program in Year 2, but, whilst computers are switched on in the majority of classes, pupils' opportunities to use these during the course of other lessons are limited. In the few sessions seen, pupils showed confidence in using information technology and made satisfactory progress. Individual pupils in Years 2 and 6 use word processing to enter text. In Year 2 the pupils edited the text using the keyboard, and only considered using the mouse for games. Pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6 understand the value of using CD-ROM to access information related to history, science and music respectively. However, in two of the three sessions seen, an adult controlled the program whilst pupils sat watching, which limits the opportunity for pupils to develop their skills. In a Year 6 science lesson, pupils competently used a digital camera to photograph bacterial

specimens, closely supervised by the teacher. In another science session, results were recorded using information technology, but the teacher set up and controlled the program. In other lessons, teachers missed opportunities to extend pupils' learning by using computers, for example to record results in science or as a different medium in art. The subject makes little contribution to pupils' literacy and numeracy skills, or to the progress of pupils with special educational needs.

122. Boys and girls enjoy using information technology when given the opportunity. They listen closely in demonstration lessons and handle equipment carefully in individual sessions. They co-operate well to share control of the program but do not independently access information technology, which limits their development of initiative and the opportunity to extend their learning.
123. The quality of teaching in the sessions observed was satisfactory. Teachers showed a sound understanding of the programs being used and gave clear explanations to the pupils. Across the school, however, planning for, and delivery of, an appropriate information technology curriculum is unsatisfactory and too little of the subject is taught. In almost all classes the subject is not timetabled or monitored, and planning to ensure that pupils' skills and expertise are developed progressively is minimal. There is no assessment of pupils' attainment or progress in information technology. The current allocation of computers in classrooms is being reviewed to raise the profile of the subject within the curriculum. Three new systems were delivered during the week of the inspection, and the school has sufficient hardware to establish the computer suite it is considering.

### **Religious education**

124. Evidence from lesson observations, assemblies, the scrutiny of pupils' work and discussions with staff and pupils, indicates that standards of attainment in religious education are in line with the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus by the end of both key stages. This maintains the standards seen at the time of the previous inspection. Pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress.
125. By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils express their ideas and discuss their experiences clearly, such as why they have special meals for important family celebrations. They respect and listen to each other when they talk about their precious things, beginning to understand that many objects have great value to their owners, although they are of no great monetary value. They enjoy learning about annual festivals such as harvest, and the Christian festivals of Christmas and Easter. Pupils successfully write their own simple accounts of the main episodes in the life of Jesus and are told stories from the Old Testament such as that of David and Goliath. This makes a satisfactory contribution to pupils' literacy skills. Pupils are introduced satisfactorily to the beliefs and customs of other people when they learn about the Jewish festivals of Sukkot and Rosh Hashanah.
126. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils thoughtfully consider special times in people's lives such as weddings and they identify some differences between similar ceremonies in different religions. They develop a satisfactory understanding of the need for rules and laws in everyday life, and the importance of rules laid down in sacred writings such as the Ten Commandments. Pupils develop a sound appreciation of the importance of

figures in the Old and New Testaments, such as Moses and John the Baptist. They understand the diversity of different religious beliefs when they listen, for example, to Buddhist stories in assemblies. They reflect positively on the importance of being able to trust in friends.

127. In the lessons observed, boys and girls respond satisfactorily. They listen well to one another and are interested and enthusiastic when joining in with discussions. However, their responses are sometimes limited by their own lack of experiences, for example when discussing what happens at weddings.
128. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. However, two unsatisfactory lessons were seen. Where teaching is satisfactory, every child is given the opportunity to participate in discussions, expectations are appropriate and there is a satisfactory balance of teacher input, children's contributions and activities. As a result, pupils make progress in understanding and awareness of the issues raised. In unsatisfactory lessons the pace is slow and teachers are unclear about what they want the children to learn. This gives rise to some inappropriate behaviour which prevents pupils from making progress.

## 128. **Other subjects or courses**

### **Art**

129. The quality of art work on display around the school is impressive. Pupils throughout the school attain high standards in the subject and make good progress in developing both their skills in, and their knowledge and understanding of art. This maintains the good position found by the previous inspection in 1996.
130. At Key Stage 1, pupils develop good observational skills, using pastels, pencils and paint to produce interesting self-portraits and drawings of fruit. Responses to a church visit, in both poetry and pictures, show great attention to detail and good links with developing pupils' literacy skills. Handwriting patterns in wax resist further contribute to literacy skills, and geometric designs to numeracy skills. Pupils' understanding of techniques to create specific effects, such as smudging pastels and pencil shading, for example in work in the style of Turner and in their representations of apples and oranges, is very good.
131. At Key Stage 2, pupils continue to develop their skills well. Work from Year 3 to Year 6 shows a good, progressive development of pupils' control over the media they use, increasing understanding of effective techniques and greater detail in observational drawing. Pupils in all year groups study the work of different artists extensively, although women artists and art from other cultures are under-represented. They create evocative pictures, full of mood, in the style of Turner, and bold, vibrant paintings in the style of, for example, Matisse, Kandinsky, Renoir and Picasso, which show a good understanding of the techniques these painters used.
132. Pupils in Year 3 paint lively portraits of themselves as animals, and interesting patterns in response to the music of Beethoven. In Year 4, group screen prints graphically represent scenes from poetry, which makes a positive contribution to their literacy skills. Pupils in Year 5 use a wide range of media and techniques to create work in ancient

Egyptian style. They research their work carefully, which makes a good contribution to their literacy skills, and discuss its progress sensibly and critically. In Year 6, pupils' pictures inspired by Andy Warhol are lively and well observed. However, sketch-books are not used consistently or effectively throughout the school for pupils to practise techniques, record observations and ideas, or for teachers to monitor pupils' attainment and progress. This was also highlighted in the previous inspection report.

133. Boys and girls of all abilities work with great concentration, interest and enthusiasm. They evaluate their efforts sensibly and critically and take great pride in their finished work. This is enhanced by the extensive displays around the school of artwork from all year groups, which reinforces the value placed on pupils' efforts and the subject in the curriculum. Many of the pupils in the school enjoyed designing and making attractive ceramic tiles to include in the lively mural in the playground 'Quiet Area'. Further interesting and atmospheric, large-scale murals enhance the learning environment. These have been painted by talented parents, with limited pupil involvement.
134. The quality of teaching is good or better in all lessons seen. In half of them it is very good. Teachers' own enthusiasm and expertise are effectively shared with all pupils, who respond positively in their desire to do well. Good use of constructive criticism and pupils' work to make teaching points as the lessons progress, ensures that pupils' skills and understanding are developed well. The expertise and talent of the co-ordinator provides inspiration and ideas for other staff. A three-dimensional art club extends more able pupils well; their sports figures, displayed in the hall, are full of life and movement.

### **Design and technology**

135. It is not possible to make a secure judgement on pupils' levels of attainment or their progress in design and technology. As a result of the structure of the timetable, only one lesson in design and technology was seen during the inspection week and there was almost no evidence in the scrutiny of work. From discussions with pupils and staff, and examination of teachers' planning, a satisfactory range of projects in the subject take place throughout the year, mainly linked to topics in other areas of the curriculum.
136. In the lesson seen, Year 4 pupils examined closely a range of money containers, discussing the materials used and different designs. They evaluate sensibly how well each container fits its purpose, for example soft materials for a pocket purse, and the range of fasteners used to keep money safe. Pupils made good progress in the lesson, improving their understanding of design to fulfil a purpose through re-sorting the containers using a range of criteria. Pupils with special educational needs are well integrated and supported, and make a full contribution to the lesson. More able pupils construct their own charts to record their findings.
137. From the work scrutiny, pupils in Year 3 have useful design books, in which they record initial sketches for a variety of projects. Their current project is designing and making sandwiches, related to their topic in science. No design books were seen in other year groups. Pupils in Year 6 recall clearly projects undertaken in earlier years, for example making big lighthouses in Key Stage 1, designing playgrounds when they were in Year 4 and Greek temples in Year 5. They explain in detail how they drew initial designs from different angles, indicating materials and construction techniques. They also remember evaluating their finished models critically and considering how they could be improved.

138. Boys and girls enjoy design and technology projects. In Year 4, they brought in an extensive range of examples of money containers to support their lesson, and all pupils became totally absorbed in the discussion. Year 6 pupils are enthusiastic about their past projects and regret that more time is not available for the subject.
139. The quality of teaching in the lesson seen was good. The teacher was careful to stress correct terminology and emphasis on close examination of the different objects, and made good links with both history and science. All pupils were fully involved, with a good range of money containers to examine, and ways of recording their findings were carefully linked to their level of ability. The school has adopted the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority's scheme of work to ensure full coverage of the specific requirements of the curriculum, but there is no mechanism for assessing pupils' work to ensure the progressive development of skills and understanding. The previous inspection judged attainment in design and technology to be generally good. Changes to the curriculum have resulted in less time being available to the subject overall. The school is committed to providing a broad and balanced range of experiences for pupils, and design and technology receives appropriate emphasis during the academic year.

### **Geography and History**

140. Pupils cover a wide range of topics in geography and history, some of which are studied separately and some of which are linked. During the inspection the structure of the timetable for humanities topics meant that only history was seen in Key Stage 1 and only geography was seen in Key Stage 2. However, judgements are based upon a scrutiny of pupils' work and teachers' plans. Pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs, attain standards appropriate to their age and commensurate with their abilities. This maintains the position, found by the previous inspection, in history and represents an improvement in geography. Pupils make satisfactory progress in historical and geographical skills, knowledge and understanding as they move through the school. The majority of pupils with special educational needs make good progress in geographical and historical understanding.
141. In Year 1, pupils identify the oldest and youngest members of their own families. They develop a satisfactory understanding of the passing of time by constructing their own personal 'timelines', and plotting major events in their own lives, such as beginning to walk and talk. By the end of the year, they compare old and contemporary toys, and place objects such as a candle, an oil lamp and an electric light in a time sequence sensibly. They use directional vocabulary correctly and develop satisfactory early map skills by drawing routes from their classroom to the hall. They produce interesting imaginary 'treasure islands' and the most able pupils use correct symbols on their maps, which makes a positive contribution to their numeracy skills. In Year 2, pupils learn about famous people, such as Florence Nightingale and Louis Braille. They appreciate the contribution of individuals to society and our understanding of it. They also realise that we gain historical information from sources such as the diaries of Samuel Pepys and Anne Frank.
142. In Year 3, pupils extend their historical understanding satisfactorily by comparing Celtic and Roman soldiers, and learning about Boudicca. In geography, they develop satisfactory subject-specific vocabulary in relation to clouds and weather. They appreciate that traditionally the landscape has dictated where communities have settled. They develop their map skills to identify correctly the location of symbols in a simple grid

and draw plans of familiar rooms. In Year 4, pupils produce useful time-lines of major events in Victoria's reign, and extend their factual knowledge satisfactorily to include the Wars of the Roses and the Tudors. They have an appropriate knowledge of dates of key events. In geography, pupils study the local hop-farming industry in detail, and link this effectively with farming habits in Victorian England.

143. In Year 5 they study the Aztecs and Ancient Greece. They develop their understanding of previous societies satisfactorily by looking at hierarchies and the position and status of women in Ancient Greece. In geography they accurately identify the course of a river, using appropriate geographical vocabulary, such as, 'source', 'waterfall' and 'tributary'. They confidently compare urban and rural communities when they study Faversham and Clerkenwell. In Year 6 the subjects are more closely linked. Pupils study the discovery of Tutankhamun and link this closely with work on rivers, and the importance of the Nile. They use the 1881 census for Davington as an interesting historical source of information and link this with reading Ordnance Survey maps.
144. The quality of teaching of history at Key Stage 1 is never less than satisfactory, with good and very good teaching seen in 40 per cent of lessons. The teaching of geography at Key Stage 2 was consistently satisfactory. Pupils enjoy their history and geography lessons, especially when their imagination is harnessed, as in a lesson about Anne Frank. History makes a sound contribution to pupils' literacy skills in Key Stage 2, when they write, for example, letters home from a Spartan soldier. Pupils use numeracy skills well in geography when they read and interpret map co-ordinates. Both subjects make a positive contribution to pupils' scientific skills, through the demand for close observation or the use of sources of evidence from which they draw conclusions.

## Music

145. Singing is a strength of the school and pupils reach standards above those expected nationally. This maintains the good position found by the previous inspection. Pupils produce and hold good tone and pitch in accompanied and unaccompanied singing. They sing well in two- and three-part songs, including pupils in Key Stage 1. Standards in listening and appraising are also good because pupils listen to a wide range of instrumental and vocal music. Pupils in Year 2 establish a good beat to simple tunes, extending their musical vocabulary. In Year 6, pupils improve their knowledge of orchestral instruments well, during a good lesson on reed instruments. Boys and girls, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in music throughout the school. In Year 3, pupils create their own base rhythms, having identified the beat in a piece of classical music. They confidently perform to each other. The standard of performance in the choir is high.
146. Pupils gain real pleasure from singing in assembly and are well motivated in lessons. They listen attentively to music, often expressing their feelings through drawing. For example, good pastel drawings in Year 3 were inspired by Beethoven's Fifth Symphony. Year 6 pupils enjoy the chance to produce drawings to convey thoughts arising from Gershwin's music.
147. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall and good in 29 per cent of lessons. Most teachers are confident in the subject and extend pupils' repertoire of music satisfactorily, introducing them to a range of appropriate technical vocabulary. They manage pupils well, having high expectations of what can be achieved, particularly at Key Stage 1.

Pupils are encouraged to be expressive, which results in a very good sound when they sing and play. Occasionally, lack of pace to a lesson inhibits pupils' enthusiasm.

148. Music has a high profile in the school. A weekly club offers more than 60 pupils a very good opportunity to extend their range of performance through music and drama. They rehearse enthusiastically for major performances in school and in the town, and sing regularly in public, for example to the elderly at the Harvest Tea and in the church at Christmas.

### **Physical education**

149. Pupils at both key stages, including those with special educational needs, attain appropriate standards in physical education, and make sound progress in most aspects of the subject. They make good progress in games. As found by the previous inspection, pupils take part in a full range of activities, which includes gymnastics, dance, games and swimming. The school has its own swimming pool and, as a result, over 90 per cent of pupils can swim 25 metres unaided by the time they leave school.
150. During the inspection the main focus was on gymnastics and games. Unfortunately, due to timetabling, only two lessons were seen at Key Stage 2, one of which was a games lesson. At Key Stage 1, pupils move in different ways such as running, hopping and jumping effectively, and without touching each other. They use the available space well. They warm up by moving at different speeds and by stretching and curling. They confidently use a good range of apparatus at different levels, including the floor, successfully linking series of movements together, for example changing their point of balance. Older pupils continue to develop these skills, although not always in a systematic way. They show a good sense of balance using different parts of their bodies both as individuals and when working in small groups. In games lessons, pupils at Key Stage 2 play a wide range of activities successfully, such as football, netball, rounders and cricket. The high level of success that the school has in local tournaments exemplifies this. Pupils work well collaboratively both in gymnastics and games. All pupils are aware of the importance of warming up and cooling down at the beginning and end of lessons.
151. Pupils enjoy all physical activities and participate fully. The school makes special arrangements for pupils who are unable to take part in lessons, for example by using them as observers. Pupils work safely and are fully aware of the need to consider the well-being of others. They work hard and listen carefully to instructions, for example when a class of Year 2 pupils was getting apparatus out and putting it away sensibly. All pupils change for physical education lessons and wear the appropriate clothing.
152. The quality of teaching is sound. Teachers at Key Stage 1 use a commercial scheme to ensure that skills are developed systematically. They ensure that within lessons there is good progression, for example in Year 1, when extending pupils' movements from a simple balance to rocking and rolling, whilst still maintaining their balance. At Key Stage 2, individual teachers develop skills progressively within a block of lessons in a specific aspect of the subject. Lessons are organised effectively, so that all pupils take a full part in all activities.
153. The subject is managed satisfactorily. There is an up-to-date policy including a programme of activities, which ensures that curriculum requirements are met and that all



aspects of the subject, such as gymnastics and dance, are fully covered. However, as at the last inspection, there is still no detailed scheme of work for Key Stage 2. There are no consistent assessment procedures at either key stage. This means that the sequential development of skills throughout Key Stage 2, and the assessment of pupils' progress, are too dependent on the expertise of individual teachers. There is a very wide range of extra-curricular activities such as dance and drama, football and rounders that significantly enriches the work in lessons, as reported at the last inspection. The school has developed a good reputation as a participant in tournaments both locally and in France.

153.

## 153. **PART C: INSPECTION DATA**

### 153. **Summary of inspection evidence**

154. The team consisted of six inspectors, including one lay inspector. The inspection was carried out in the week beginning 4<sup>th</sup> October 1999 and inspectors completed the equivalent of 24 days in school. Before the inspection, two inspectors attended a meeting for parents to discuss the inspection and hear the views of the 30 parents who attended. An analysis of the 188 questionnaires returned was also made.

155. During the course of the inspection, 75.9 hours were spent observing 104 lessons in whole or in part. A total of 131.5 hours was spent in gathering first-hand evidence. A sample of pupils from each year group was heard reading aloud and pupils' behaviour in and around the school was observed. Discussions were held with pupils, staff, parents and governors. The team scrutinised a range of documentation including policy documents, teachers' planning, financial statements, samples of pupils' work in each year group, pupils' records and attendance registers. Inspectors also looked at the resources provided by the school for the pupils.

155. **DATA AND INDICATORS**

155. **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	400	2	189	108

155. **Teachers and classes**

155. **Qualified teachers (YR - Y6)**

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent):	16.6
Number of pupils per qualified teacher:	24

155. **Education support staff (YR - Y6)**

Total number of education support staff:	13
Total aggregate hours worked each week:	243

Average class size:	29
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155. **Financial data**

Financial year:	1998 / 1999
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	£
Total Income	700 248
Total Expenditure	677 799
Expenditure per pupil	1 580
Balance brought forward from previous year	-16 094
Balance carried forward to next year	3 624

155. **PARENTAL SURVEY**

Number of questionnaires sent out:	264
Number of questionnaires returned:	188
Percentage return:	71

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	35	57	6	2	0
I would find it easy to approach the school with questions or problems to do with my child(ren)	51	44	4	1	0
The school handles complaints from parents well	27	45	26	2	0
The school gives me a clear understanding of what is taught	22	59	13	6	0
The school keeps me well informed about my child(ren)'s progress	27	63	6	3	1
The school enables my child(ren) to achieve a good standard of work	35	55	9	1	0
The school encourages children to get involved in more than just their daily lessons	41	49	9	1	0
I am satisfied with the work that my child(ren) is/are expected to do at home	23	58	9	9	1
The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on my child(ren)	44	46	9	1	0
The school achieves high standards of good behaviour	42	49	8	1	0
My child(ren) like(s) school	57	37	3	2	1