

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **ST PETER'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL**

East Grinstead

LEA area: West Sussex

Unique reference number: 126060

Headteacher: Mr Gerard Mapp

Reporting inspector: Margaret Cooper  
Inspector Number: 15175

Dates of inspection: 21 - 24 May 2001

Inspection number: 191114

Full inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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## **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Type of school:	Infant and Junior
School category:	Voluntary Aided
Age range of pupils:	4 - 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Chapman's Lane East Grinstead West Sussex
Postcode:	RH19 1JB
Telephone number:	01342 321985
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr William J Blackledge
Date of previous inspection:	14 – 17 September 1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
15175	Margaret Cooper	Registered inspector	English Art and design Music Special educational needs English as an additional language	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? a) School results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
9744	Peter Brown	Lay inspector		How high are standards? b) Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
20962	Chris Ifould	Team inspector	Science Information and communication technology Design technology Physical education Equal opportunities	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
11901	Pat Lowe	Team inspector	Mathematics Geography History Foundation stage	

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## **PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

St Peter's is an average-sized Catholic primary school for children aged from four to 11, which serves the local and surrounding parishes, and also a number of families from other faiths in the local community. There are currently 205 boys and girls, of whom a small minority are from minority ethnic cultures, although there are no pupils for whom English is not their first language. Children under five are welcomed into the Reception class in September, although some do not attend full-time until the summer term. Taken together, children show above average attainment when they enter the school. The social and economic circumstances of families are generally very favourable. Both the proportion of pupils with special educational needs and the percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals are below average. The close links between school, home and church are a distinctive feature.

### **HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS**

St. Peter's is an effective school. Pupils achieve well to attain above average standards across the curriculum by the age of eleven, particularly in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science, and excellent standards in their attitudes, values and personal development. The quality of both teaching and learning is good overall, and the school is well led and managed. When account is taken of standards, progress and unit costs, the school provides good value for money.

#### **What the school does well**

- Pupils' behaviour, attitudes towards learning, and relationships with others are all outstanding
- Standards and progress in music are well above average
- Speaking and listening skills of pupils throughout the school are well above average
- Both spiritual and moral development are excellent, and social development is also promoted very well
- The school has established a very good partnership with parents, which has a strong impact on pupils' learning
- The governors are very effective in fulfilling their responsibilities and shaping the direction of the school

#### **What could be improved**

- Pupils' progress in writing
- Although satisfactory, teaching is not as strong in Years 1 and 2 as in other years and pupils in these classes do not make as much progress in English, mathematics and science
- Work is not matched closely to the differing needs of pupils in all lessons
- Standards and progress in information and communication technology (ICT) are not as good as in other subjects
- Subject co-ordinators are not sufficiently informed about pupils' attainment and progress in each year

*The areas for improvement will form the basis of the governors' action plan.*

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

Improvement has been satisfactory since the last inspection in January 1997, since when there have been two changes of headteacher. At Key Stage 1 improvements in National Curriculum test results have been above the national trend in reading and writing, and below in mathematics. Levels of attainment have been maintained in mathematics and improved in all other subjects. At Key Stage 2 improvement in test results has been in line with the national trend in English, but below in mathematics and science. Levels of attainment have been at least maintained in all subjects, and raised in design and technology (DT), geography, ICT, music and physical education (PE). Standards in pupils' attitudes, values and personal development have been raised, and most of the key issues have been successfully resolved. The school shows a good capacity for further improvement.

## STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 11 year olds based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	1998	1999	2000	2000	
English	C	A	A	A	well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E
Mathematics	B	C	A	C	
Science	B	B	C	D	

As the table indicates, pupils' standards overall by the age of 11 were well above the national average, and in line with the average for similar schools. English was particularly strong and science comparatively weak because not enough pupils attained standards above those expected for their age. The school achieved its targets in English and mathematics. From a high point in 1996, the rate of improvement has been below the national trend. Fluctuations from year to year, however, are to be expected in a one-form entry school where the performance of a small number of pupils can have a disproportionate effect on overall percentages. Evidence from the work seen shows that standards are above average in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. Pupils attain the levels expected for their age in ICT, and higher levels in all other subjects.

Children in the Reception class achieve well in all areas of learning for children of this age, and attain above average standards by the time they enter Year 1. In the year 2000 national tests at Key Stage 1 pupils attained standards that were well above average in reading, above average in writing and in line with the national average in mathematics. Compared with similar schools, standards were above average in reading, average in writing and below average in mathematics. Inspection evidence shows that standards are average in mathematics and above average in English and science. They attain the levels expected for their age in ICT, and higher levels in all other subjects. Standards in music are well above the national expectation throughout the school, as are speaking and listening skills.

Pupils achieve well by the age of 11, but make stronger progress in the Reception year and at Key Stage 2 than at Key Stage 1. There are no significant differences in the achievement of any groups of pupils overall, although high attainers could achieve higher standards in mathematics. Those with special educational needs make good progress towards the targets on their individual education plans and statements.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Excellent. Pupils are enthusiastic about every aspect of school life. They are highly motivated to perform well in all they do
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Excellent. Pupils behave very well in lessons and around the school, and treat property with respect. They are friendly and courteous to teachers, visitors and to one another.
Personal development and relationships	These are also excellent. Pupils work and play very effectively with others. They have a clear understanding of their own responsibilities and are sensitive to the feelings of others.
Attendance	Well above average, and pupils arrive punctually for lessons

Outstanding features of pupils' positive attitudes, values and personal development include their determination to achieve well in all they do, and the quality of their relationships with each other as shown in the extent to which they work effectively and productively in collaborative groups.



## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	Good	Good	Very good

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

In the lessons seen both teaching and learning were very good. Teaching was at least satisfactory or better in all lessons, and very good or better in 36 per cent of lessons. There was no unsatisfactory teaching. In the Reception year, teaching is good and children make good progress in all six areas of learning for children of this age. Evidence from looking at pupils' work in the rest of the school over a longer period shows a different picture from that indicated from observing lessons. Over the longer term teaching and learning are satisfactory at Key Stage 1 and good at Key Stage 2. This difference is because teachers do not make sufficient use of assessment information to plan learning for pupils' differing needs within each class. Thus, learning opportunities do not build systematically enough on the current skills, knowledge and understanding of all pupils to promote very good progress over time. Pupils make sound progress at Key Stage 1, and good progress at Key Stage 2 because of teachers' high expectations and levels of subject expertise. There are some variations between subjects. At Key Stage 1 teaching is satisfactory in English, mathematics, science and ICT. It is at least good in all other subjects, and music is taught very well. At Key Stage 2, teaching is satisfactory in ICT, and at least good in all other subjects. Again, music is taught very well and, as a result, pupils throughout the school make very good progress in this subject.

Although literacy and numeracy are taught well overall, there are shortcomings in writing, and the teaching of basic skills is not as strong in Years 1 and 2 as in other years. There are no other significant variations in how well the school meets the needs of its pupils, although work is not closely matched to the differing needs of pupils in all lessons. Good account is taken of special educational needs and these pupils make good progress towards the targets on their individual education plans. A particular strength of teaching is teachers' rapport with their classes, the high quality working ethos they establish, and the skill with which they manage pupils. As a result, pupils approach their tasks with interest and confidence, behave in an exemplary manner, and work productively in all lessons.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum that is enhanced by visits, including a residential trip, and visitors to the school.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	The school makes good provision for children with special educational needs, including those who have statements of special educational need. Support staff are used well and contribute to the good progress pupils make towards the targets on their individual education plans.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	For spiritual and moral development it is excellent, and for social development it is very good. The school promotes pupils' cultural development well, overall. Good emphasis is given to teaching pupils to appreciate the cultural traditions of Western Europe, and sound attention is paid to helping them value the diversity and richness of other cultures.
How well the school cares for its pupils	St. Peter's is a very caring school where pupils are valued, respected and given good support and guidance, and careful attention is paid to their health and safety.

Parents hold the school in very high regard. The school has established very good links with parents, whose contribution has a positive impact on the work of St Peter's and on children's learning. The curriculum meets statutory requirements for all its pupils, and is being revised to take account of national guidance. There has been recent improvement in writing although further development is required. Music is a particular strength of the school's provision. The high level of pastoral care is a strong feature of the school, and all adults establish very good relationships with children.

Assessment information is not used well enough to ensure that pupils make consistent progress in all lessons, particularly in English, mathematics and science.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The school is well led and managed. The headteacher's leadership provides clear educational direction for the school. He is supported well by the deputy headteacher and co-ordinators. However, the role of co-ordinators in monitoring standards and progress needs to be strengthened.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors make a very positive contribution to the work of the school, and are well informed about the school's strengths and weaknesses. They give strong support to the headteacher, and fulfil their responsibilities well.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school reviews its own performance satisfactorily through monitoring teaching and analysing the results of national and other tests. Appropriate priorities are identified for development in order to raise standards further.
The strategic use of resources	The school's educational priorities to improve pupils' learning opportunities are supported well through careful financial planning.

The school is well provided with experienced teachers to meet the demands of the curriculum and needs of pupils, as well as learning, administrative and cleaning support staff whose efforts have a positive impact on the work of the school. The school building and attractively landscaped grounds provide a high quality environment for adults and children. There is a good quantity and range of learning resources in all subjects.

The headteacher, who has been in post for less than two years, is establishing a calm and caring working environment for adults and pupils. He has a clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. Governors are very effective in shaping the direction of the school. Co-ordinators carry out their responsibilities and identify areas for development but procedures for them to monitor standards and progress in each year are not effective enough. The allocation of responsibilities and class release time requires review to ensure all aspects of the work of the school are monitored effectively. The school seeks to obtain good value for money when making financial decisions. Staff and governors, through their shared commitment to improvement, show a good capacity to succeed.

## PARENTS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The school helps children become mature and responsible</li> <li>• Teaching is good</li> <li>• They feel comfortable about approaching the school with their concerns</li> <li>• Children make good progress</li> <li>• Behaviour is good</li> <li>• Children enjoy coming to school</li> <li>• Children are expected to work hard and achieve their best</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The range of activities outside lessons</li> <li>• The amount of homework</li> </ul>

The inspection team agrees with parents' positive views of the school. There has been recent improvement in the range of extra-curricular activities and inspectors find the current provision to be good. Parents who are dissatisfied with the amount of homework do not agree with each other about whether there is too little or too much. Inspectors judged it to be sound, overall. No other issues were raised by more than a small minority of parents.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

### **HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?**

#### **The school's results and pupils' achievements**

1. Standards are above average by the age of 11, and pupils achieve well during their time in the school. However, although progress is at least sound in every year, pupils progress at a faster rate in the Reception year, now known as the Foundation Stage, and at Key Stage 2 (Years 3 to 6) than at Key Stage 1 (Years 1 and 2). This is because of stronger teaching in the Reception and junior classes, and high expectations of pupils' attainment in these classes. Compared to the last inspection, above average standards have been maintained in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science at the age of 11, as well as in art and design, and history. Pupils are attaining higher standards in design and technology (DT), geography, information and communication technology (ICT), music and physical education (PE). There has been considerable improvement in the progress made by children at the Foundation Stage since the previous inspection. The sound progress at Key Stage 1 and good progress at Key Stage 2 have both been maintained.
2. Analysis of the Year 2000 National Curriculum test results at the age of 11 shows overall standards to be well above the national average and in line with the average for similar schools. Standards in English were well above the national average and also well above the average for similar schools. Standards in mathematics were well above the national average and broadly average in relation to those of similar schools. In science, standards were in line with the national average but below the average for similar schools. This was because not enough pupils attained Level 5, above the national expectation for their age. Over the last five years the rate of improvement has been below the national trend, notably in mathematics and science. In these two subjects girls have also been performing slightly better than boys over the past three years. The school successfully achieved its targets for the Year 2000 in English and mathematics, and these targets were appropriately challenging.
3. The evidence from inspection shows a slightly different picture. Attainment is above average by the age of 11. Differences in standards compared to last year's test results are largely due to fluctuations between years found in schools with a one-form entry, where one or two pupils' results can have a disproportionate effect on overall percentages. The current Year 6 class, for example, has a higher proportion of pupils with special educational needs than last year's class. There is no evidence of significant variations in achievement between boys and girls currently in the school, or by any groups of pupils overall although higher attainers could achieve higher standards in mathematics.
4. Pupils achieve well in Years 3 to 6 and attain above average standards in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. Pupils make good progress overall in literacy and numeracy. However, achievement in pupils' writing could be better. In contrast, standards and progress in science have improved significantly in the past year as a result of the school's identifying this as an area requiring development and providing specialist teaching to ensure that Year 6 pupils make the progress of which they are capable. Both standards and progress in ICT are satisfactory, and could be better. Pupils attain standards above the national expectation in art and design, DT, geography, history, and PE, and make good progress in all these subjects. Very good progress is made in music and, as a result, pupils attain standards that are well above the levels expected for their age.
5. By the age of 11 pupils have very well developed speaking skills and take good account of others' views in discussion. They read and enjoy junior fiction with good levels of understanding. In writing, pupils express their ideas clearly through story, playscript and autobiography. Higher attainers sustain and extend their ideas, showing a secure grasp of their chosen form, and using vocabulary imaginatively and with precision. A greater proportion of pupils should achieve this standard, above the expectation for their age. In mathematics, pupils interpret a variety of data to calculate and compare flights from London to other cities, taking into account different time zones. They show good knowledge and understanding of the science topics they have covered, including their work with pulleys. Through their work in art and design, pupils are familiar with artists such as Picasso and Van Gogh and compare their styles. In DT, they have developed their understanding of mechanisms through constructing fairground models using power from solar energy and batteries. They display well-developed geographical skills when they use atlases, maps and the Internet to find information about the

Isle of Wight, and show knowledge through their work in history about aspects of life in East Grinstead in Victorian times. Sound skills in ICT are shown by their use of information from newspapers to create a database of world weather. Year 6 pupils show musical knowledge of concepts such as harmony and discord, work with standard notation, and create and perform their own group compositions which are of an excellent standard. In PE, well-controlled throwing and striking skills are displayed during rounders games.

6. Children show above average attainment when they enter the Reception class, and come to school well prepared for learning. They make good progress in all six areas of learning at the Foundation Stage, and attain above average standards by the end of the year. Overall standards are constrained somewhat by the significant proportion of children who attend on a full-time basis for only a limited period of time.
7. By the age of five, children approach their activities eagerly and confidently, and work well independently. Their behaviour and relationships with others are excellent. Children express their ideas clearly when speaking to others, read picture books with developing accuracy, and convey their ideas in writing, many in simple sentences. They count accurately, many up to 50, and are developing understanding of addition and subtraction. Considerable knowledge is shown of the local area through a series of visits. Children also understand ways they have changed since they were babies, begin to explore scientific ideas through studying light and colour, and use computers to support their learning. Construction apparatus and tools such as pencils and paintbrushes are handled with increasing manual control, and children display good levels of co-ordination in their gymnastic activities. Reception children explore mixing paint colours and create collages such as *The Hungry Caterpillar*. They enjoy listening and responding to short pieces of music, singing from their repertoire of songs, and show developing skills in using percussion instruments.
8. In the Year 2000 National Curriculum tests at the age of seven, pupils attained standards in reading that were well above the national average, and also above the average for similar schools. Standards in writing were above the national average and in line with the average for similar schools. In mathematics, standards were in line with the national average and below the average for similar schools. Teachers' assessments of science showed standards to be well above the national average, and also above the average for similar schools. Over the last five years, the rate of improvement in reading and writing has been above the national trend. In mathematics, improvement has not kept pace with the national trend from a high point in 1996. Taking the three years 1998 to 2000 together, boys have performed better than girls.
9. The evidence from inspection shows a similar picture. Pupils attain above average standards in English and science, but only average standards in mathematics. Progress in these subjects is sound and could be better. Progress in writing is unsatisfactory, and steps taken by the school to improve standards in mathematics are not yet resulting in pupils achieving as well as they are able in using and applying their mathematical knowledge. Pupils make sound progress in ICT and attain the levels expected for their age but, again, they are capable of achieving higher standards. In contrast, pupils make good progress in art and design, DT, geography, history and PE, and attain standards above those expected in these subjects. Progress in music is very good and, as a result, pupils attain standards well above the national expectation in this subject. Since the last inspection levels of attainment at Key Stage 1 have been maintained in mathematics, and improved in all other subjects.
10. By the age of seven, pupils achieve above average standards in English, and this is seen particularly in their effective listening and the extensive vocabulary they have for their age. They read simple story books accurately and fluently, and express their ideas clearly when writing stories, diaries and letters. However, a significant minority of pupils do not attain the expected level for their age. In mathematics, Year 2 pupils show a developing understanding of standard units of measuring time ranging from seconds to months. They demonstrate well-developed scientific knowledge and skills as seen in their observation and recording of the life cycle of the frog. In their art and design work they produce observational drawings of bicycles with careful attention paid to detail, and through their DT projects show their understanding of the processes of designing, making and evaluating their work. Pupils compare and contrast the geographical features of East Grinstead with those of the fictional Isle of Struay and, in history, show a developing sense of chronology and significant knowledge of how aspects of life have changed from times in the past. Sound ICT skills are shown in the use of an art program to produce colour and monochrome designs. In music Year 2 pupils make their own percussion instruments which they use to take part in a group performance and, in PE, they show well-developed games skills.

11. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards the targets on their individual education plans and statements of special need, and similar progress to their peers over the whole curriculum. There is no evidence of variations in progress between pupils of different cultural origins, although the school has not yet introduced appropriate monitoring procedures. There is no overall variation in the progress of pupils of differing abilities over the longer term, apart from that of higher attainers in mathematics, although there are frequent differences in individual lessons. This is because teachers do not make sufficient use of assessment information to match work closely to the differing needs of pupils within classes. Gifted and talented pupils make sound progress overall in lessons, and benefit further from opportunities to participate in challenging activities arranged by the local educational authority.

### **Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development**

12. Pupils of all ages display excellent attitudes towards school. They enjoy coming to school, and are highly enthusiastic about every aspect of school life, including their teachers, the curriculum and out-of-school activities. Their exceptionally high level of commitment contributes positively to high attendance levels and the rate at which they learn. On occasion (for example, in a music lesson seen) the efforts invested by pupils in their determination to achieve their best, and the levels at which they maintain their concentration and work productively, demonstrate attitudes towards learning that are outstanding. Pupils throughout the school take great pride in their personal achievements and are motivated to perform to their full potential.
13. Behaviour throughout the school is excellent. Pupils are attentive in class, considerate to the needs of others, and display respect to teachers, visitors and fellow pupils alike. Movement around the school is orderly and purposeful. Doors are held open for visitors, usually with a greeting and smile. Pupils of all ages display great respect for property and the incidence of destructive or, indeed, any anti-social behaviour, is rare. The total absence of pupil exclusion as a disciplinary sanction provides testimony to the excellent standard of behaviour that characterises the school. During the four days of the inspection no incidents of inappropriate behaviour were observed such as bullying, racism or sexism. Furthermore, no examples of oppressive behaviour were reported by parents either in the questionnaire or in discussion.
14. Personal relationships between pupils are also excellent. They collaborate effectively together, both in the classroom and during play, providing each other with encouragement and practical support. The extent to which pupils work productively and sensitively without close monitoring by an adult, in groups of up to seven, is remarkable, and this was seen in various subjects including English, music and art. A particular example of informal collaboration is the enthusiasm that exists for traditional playground games, which involve children participating together in structured activity without any adult supervision. Teachers are extremely effective in nurturing the personal development of their pupils, and clear progression can be observed as children move through the different age groups. Pupils, even in the early years, have a clear understanding of their personal responsibilities, both in the classroom and in the wider world outside. They demonstrate, at all age levels, an acute awareness of the feelings of other people, and this sensitivity is effectively developed through the use of 'circle' time, when pupils sit in a circle and share their ideas and feelings with each other.
15. Pupils display a high level of initiative and personal responsibility. They frequently demonstrate independent decision-making in class and are keen to take personal responsibility when opportunities arise.
16. Levels of attendance in the school are very good and exceed national averages. Pupils also arrive punctually for lessons. The incidence of late arrival to school is low, and attendance records are well maintained and accurate. A minority of parents are inclined to withdraw pupils from school for the purpose of holidays, which can have an adverse effect on their children's academic progress.

### **HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?**

17. The quality of both teaching and learning was very good in the lessons seen during the inspection. Teaching was at least satisfactory in all lessons seen. It was good or better in 81 per cent of lessons, and very good or excellent in 36 per cent. However, the evidence from pupils' learning over time shows a picture that is not quite as strong. The quality of teaching is good overall and results in pupils making good progress by the age of 11. The difference is

largely linked to teachers making insufficient use of assessment information in planning learning for the differing needs of pupils within each class to ensure very good progress over time. Another contributory factor is the quality of lesson planning as seen during the inspection. In the best examples, these are a useful tool, both for helping teachers focus clearly on intended learning by the end of each lesson and for helping them evaluate teaching and progress after the lesson. In other examples, there is an undue emphasis on the activities pupils will be given and learning intentions for each group are not made clear.

18. There is some variation in teaching between subjects and stages within the school. Both teaching and learning are good at the Foundation Stage. As a result, Reception children make good progress in all the areas of learning for children of this age, and are prepared well for their future learning in Years 1 and 2. The Reception teacher has good knowledge and understanding of the needs of young children and has high expectations of the standards they can achieve. She manages them well and provides an appropriate range of experiences to stimulate their learning. Tasks are matched well to the differing needs of children within the class. The teacher also establishes a secure environment with a positive learning ethos. As a result, children enjoy their activities and work confidently and productively. Learning support assistants are used appropriately to support and extend children's progress, although the school has not appointed an assistant to work exclusively with the Reception class. This constrains the extent to which teacher and assistant can work in complementary roles to ensure a consistent learning experience in all lessons.
19. Teaching in Years 1 and 2 is satisfactory and enables pupils to make sound progress in their learning. It is satisfactory in English, mathematics, science and ICT. Teaching in all other subjects is at least good, and is very good in music. In Years 3 to 6 the quality of both teaching and learning is good overall. It is satisfactory in ICT, at least good in all other subjects and very good in music. The basic skills of literacy and numeracy are taught satisfactorily at Key Stage 1 and well at Key Stage 2. Work in other subjects of the curriculum is used to promote numeracy skills, but the potential for learning in other subjects to promote writing skills is insufficiently exploited. The difference between key stages largely arises from variations in teachers' expectations of pupils' standards, and in teachers' knowledge and understanding of subjects, but is also linked to shortcomings in monitoring learning at Key Stage 1.
20. Teachers throughout the school are skilful in establishing a positive working ethos. They plan a variety of learning experiences that engage pupils' interest, have very high expectations of behaviour and manage their classes well. As a result, pupils show positive attitudes towards their activities, take pride in their efforts, and work very productively to achieve well in all they do. Teachers also have high expectations of pupils' capacity to work individually and to work collaboratively as part of a small or large group. Thus, pupils have opportunities to learn in different ways, and to support and extend each other's learning. Overall, teachers take good account of special educational needs in their planning, although the quality of this provision varies somewhat between lessons. It is best when the special needs teacher or assistants work with individual pupils or groups and their support helps them make very good progress towards the targets in their individual education plans. In contrast, teachers do not plan consistently well to meet their learning needs when not assisted by support staff.
21. A weakness in teaching at both key stages, particularly in English, mathematics and science, is shortcomings in the quality of day-to-day assessment, and in using assessment information to match learning closely to the differing needs of pupils within each class. In some lessons, for example in English, one task is given to the whole class that is not equally appropriate for all pupils. In others, teachers adapt tasks for different abilities but these are not matched closely enough to current stages of attainment. As a result, higher attainers make the best progress in some lessons, whilst the needs of lower attainers are met more effectively in others. Although this does not result in overall variations in progress between groups, except in mathematics, it does mean that the learning experiences provided do not allow pupils to build consistently and systematically on their previous skills, knowledge and understanding, and it constrains their progress over time.
22. Characteristic strengths of teaching were seen in a Year 6 English lesson in which the quality of both teaching and learning was very good. In this lesson the pupils were deeply engaged in reading and discussing extracts from Betsy Byars' novel *The Eighteenth Emergency*, and knew the teacher intended them to extend their awareness of how the author creates her characters, and to express their own personal responses. The teacher established an excellent working ethos within the class, in which pupils were keen to contribute their own well-considered ideas.

The teacher encouraged them to explain and justify their opinions by referring to the text, and she responded by respecting their ideas and extending their learning by drawing conclusions from them or drawing pupils' attention to other examples. When the class was asked to generate adjectives to describe feelings when being threatened by a bully, she allowed almost every pupil to answer but at a very speedy rate so that pupils were able to learn from each other's suggestions without losing interest or concentration. When pupils suggested they may feel like kicking or hitting a bully she exploited the opportunity skilfully to promote moral development by accepting the validity of aggressive feelings but also highlighting the inappropriateness of carrying out such a response. Good subject expertise was seen in her advice for pupils to limit minor words in their writing to concentrate the power of their message. The quality of expressive writing produced by the end of the lesson confirmed the very good gains made by all groups in achieving the learning intentions.

23. Teaching has improved since the last inspection when it was found to be unsatisfactory in a significant proportion of lessons. A regular programme of monitoring teaching, together with arrangements for performance management, has the potential to further improve both teaching and learning.

### **HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS OR STUDENTS?**

24. The last inspection reported that the school provided a broad and well-balanced curriculum, which met statutory requirements in all subjects apart from information technology. The school has made satisfactory progress since then in consolidating its strategic curricular planning to meet statutory requirements.
25. Since the last inspection, the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been introduced into schools and the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) has published model schemes of work for all other subjects. The curriculum at St Peter's is based on these documents and thus the school demonstrates its intention to provide the required broad and balanced curriculum. It is still, however, in the first year of working through these schemes and, in line with many other schools, is using the opportunity provided by the National Curriculum 2000 guidance to adjust the balance of provision and timings to reflect its own needs and circumstances. As a foundation school, St Peter's is also required to devote ten per cent of its timetable to religious education, which considerably exceeds the national average. Thus, although the overall allocation of time to some subjects this year falls below national averages, the school provides a broad range of worthwhile learning opportunities and has redressed shortcomings found during the last inspection with respect to provision for what is now known as ICT. Music is now a particular strength of the curriculum for all pupils.
26. The last report also noted that not all subjects had policies or schemes of work. Use of the national literacy and numeracy frameworks and QCA schemes gives a firm steer to planning and teaching of all subjects, and the School Improvement Plan details the timescale for revision and agreement of subject policies. The school also includes personal, social and health education in its curriculum, through which it meets the requirements to give pupils health and sex education and attention to drug misuse. The school is in the process of strengthening its provision by adopting the 'Education for Personal Relationships' scheme developed by the church authorities.
27. The above average standards attained by St Peter's pupils in National Curriculum tests for 11-year olds indicates that the basic skills of literacy and numeracy are well taught. The school thinks carefully about these important areas and how to meet identified needs. In the period leading up to and during the inspection, for instance, teachers focused on developing writing skills during literacy hours and reading skills in other time allocated for the purpose. This arrangement is having a positive effect on the standards of pupils' writing, although further development is required to increase opportunities for sustained writing, and provide more opportunities for pupils to develop their writing skills across the curriculum. The potential for pupils to develop their basic skills through work in other subjects of the curriculum is not fully exploited. Short-term planning gives insufficient emphasis to when and how learning in other subjects is used to promote literacy, numeracy and ICT skills.
28. The curriculum is enriched by regular visits to places of educational interest, including Hever Castle and the Ashdown Forest, and a residential trip to the Isle of Wight as well as special

events such as a mathematics week. There is a good range of after-school sports clubs offered initially to pupils in the older junior classes but thereafter to other pupils, including some in the infants. The actual sports change seasonally but include football, netball, rugby, cricket, rounders, cross country running and athletics. There is also an art club for infants and plans are in hand to introduce a French club. Many of the sporting activities culminate in friendly or competitive matches and tournaments involving schools locally. St Peter's is also looking to develop links with other schools and the local community through continuing development of its grounds. The school has attracted grants from outside bodies and involved parents, community and local businesses in providing such learning resources as wildflower areas, a quiet garden, plants, trees and seating. It intends to invite local schools to share the use of its resources for educational and social uses.

29. The extent to which the school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good, and shows considerable improvement since the previous inspection. Provision for pupils' spiritual development of pupils is excellent. The school vigorously and consistently projects a strong Christian ethos through the particular tenets of the Roman Catholic faith. Pupils are provided with a wide range of spiritual experiences, including assemblies, mass and daily prayer in the classroom. A particular strength of the school is the frequency of opportunities for pupils to undertake silent contemplation, and the provision of the quiet garden for reflection during break times. Pupils were observed to respond positively to such opportunities in both a school assembly and at an Ascension Day mass. Pupils are also provided with experiences that promote awe and wonder. This occurs not only through activities of a religious nature but also through exposure to cultural and artistic experiences within a conventional teaching context. Examples seen during the inspection included the pupils' response to a particularly moving piece of music, and Year 3 pupils' reaction to an Egyptian 'mummy' in their classroom.
30. The school places considerable and appropriate emphasis on the moral development of pupils. They are rigorously challenged in both assembly and classroom situations to consider and debate moral issues, particularly with respect to personal responsibility. Pupils of all ages display an excellent understanding of right and wrong and are able to distinguish clearly between appropriate and inappropriate behaviour.
31. The school is very effective in promoting the social development of pupils. Classroom teachers provide appropriate opportunities for pupils to work together collaboratively, and a number of instances were observed of pupils working effectively together during recreational periods. A typical example was five pupils working together in the playground to design and construct a leaving card for one of their classmates.
32. The school is effective in providing a wide range of opportunities for pupils to develop their cultural awareness, partly through their learning in subjects such as music, art and design, and geography. Regular visits are also made to local museums, art galleries and other places of cultural interest. Pupils are clearly stimulated by such experiences, which serve to develop their appreciation of music, art, and local history etc. The extent to which the school helps pupils appreciate the diversity and richness of other cultures is sound, including the organisation of two cultural awareness weeks each year.



## HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

33. The school's procedures for ensuring the health and safety of pupils, including arrangements for child protection, are good. Health and safety aspects are effectively co-ordinated through the buildings sub-committee of the Governing Body, and one governor conducts a full inspection of the school each term. Teachers are aware of health and safety implications in their lessons, and appropriate attention was given to potential safety risks involved in the throwing of bean bags during a PE lesson. Children are encouraged to protect themselves from sunburn through wearing hats, using sun cream, and taking advantage of the shade provided by trees. Accidents, however minor, are properly recorded, and procedures are in place for parents to be appropriately informed. No formal risk assessment has been carried out recently and this matter needs to be rectified as a matter of urgency.
34. Child protection procedures have been established and are effectively operated. The headteacher is the member of staff with designated responsibility, and all teachers are familiar with details of the procedure, including common recognition signals associated with child abuse. A detailed child protection policy has been approved by the Governing Body, which details the procedures to be applied.
35. The school satisfactorily monitors pupils' personal development. Teachers know the pupils in their classes well and respond effectively to their individual personal needs. Personal development is closely monitored and mechanisms for recording progress are satisfactory. Arrangements for providing personal support and guidance to pupils are good. Teachers themselves provide counselling, where necessary, and additional support is provided by an external trained counsellor from the Catholic Children's Society who visits the school on a weekly basis. The headteacher operates an 'open door' policy that allows pupils to approach him directly when they have any particular concerns.
36. Very effective procedures are in place to monitor and further improve attendance levels. Unexplained absences are properly followed up and the importance of good attendance is regularly emphasised in newsletters. The importance of good time keeping is highlighted in the school prospectus.
37. The school has procedures for promoting good behaviour and they are very effectively implemented throughout the school. The school's behaviour policy clearly spells out the standards expected of pupils and appropriate strategies to achieve these standards. The school operates a 'fair but firm' policy that is clearly understood by staff, pupils and parents alike.
38. The school has developed very effective strategies for combating oppressive behaviour, particularly with regard to bullying. Documented procedures are fully understood by teachers. Although incidents of oppressive behaviour are rare, the existence of realistic and workable procedures promotes an appropriate and effective response when the occasional incident does occur.
39. The school has good procedures for identifying and assessing special educational needs, and this information is used well to set targets on individual education plans. The school also makes good use of advice from external specialist agencies. The support provided by a special needs teacher and learning support assistants makes a positive impact on the progress pupils make towards their targets.
40. At the time of the last inspection, the school had identified the need to develop assessment as a priority in its development plan. There has been significant progress in this area but further development is still required.
41. The school makes suitable arrangements to carry out formal baseline assessments when children enter and just before they leave the Reception class. It also carries out the required national tests and assessments when pupils are aged seven and 11. In addition, the school makes use of nationally optional tests in Years 3, 4 and 5, as well as additional assessment information which is kept in class files. The potential of this information to help the school evaluate its effectiveness in promoting year on year progress year by year for all its pupils is not used as much as it should be. In contrast, the school carries out a careful analysis of national test results to identify differences in attainment between subjects and groups of pupils.

This information is then used effectively to address shortcomings in curricular provision as seen, for example, in recent development in science.

42. Teachers keep records of progress during the Foundation Stage by noting the 'stepping stones' that children achieve en route to the Early Learning Goals. Similar running records have been introduced for English, mathematics and ICT, and some aspects of science. In other subjects, teachers are beginning to make use of assessments at the end of study units and blocks of work. They have also begun to assemble the work of a sample of pupils to give information about what is being learned and to demonstrate attainments through annotated examples matched to National Curriculum level descriptors. However, there is no policy or statement of what these records should comprise to ensure consistency throughout the school.
43. Assessment information is used to track and predict individuals' progress and also to organise pupils into groups of similar ability within lessons. However, there are shortcomings in the use made of assessment information to plan learning for the differing needs of pupils within lessons and to ensure that tasks are appropriately challenging for all groups. The practice of regularly carrying out tests to produce reading and spelling ages for all pupils requires review. A review should evaluate the effectiveness of time spent administering and recording such tests in the light of how useful such information is in guiding planning and teaching for the majority of pupils.
44. The school recognises that pupils and parents are not always given useful information about what pupils know in relation to descriptions of levels of attainment in the National Curriculum and what they should be aiming to achieve within a given time. The school does not satisfactorily exploit the potential for such knowledge and targets to raise pupils' awareness of how to improve their standards, and for their parents to support them.

#### **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?**

45. Parents hold the school in extremely high regard. The vast majority of parents consider they are kept well informed of their children's progress and feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or with a problem. They also express the view that the school works closely with parents.
46. The links that the school has established with parents are very effective and make a positive contribution to pupils' academic attainment. The school actively encourages parents' involvement in all aspects of school life. The headteacher and his staff are welcoming to parents, who are made to feel an integral part of the school community. There has been recent improvement in the very strong informal links, which encourage parents to raise any concerns or issues immediately before or after the school day.
47. Parental involvement contributes very positively to the overall work of the school. A dedicated group of parents assist in the classroom, and help is readily given with school excursions, and the library. Fundraising activities and social events are co-ordinated through a very active School Association that provides a valuable link between the school and parent body. Considerable sums of money are raised each year through the Association, and this enhances the quantity and quality of educational provision.
48. The school works closely with the parents of pupils with special educational needs. The parents contribute to reviews of their children's targets in individual education plans and statements and are kept closely informed of their achievements. Many increase their children's progress by helping them at home to achieve their learning and other targets. A weekly 'drop in' clinic enables parents of pupils with special educational needs, as well as other parents, to share their concerns and seek guidance from the special educational needs co-ordinator.
49. The quality of the information provided for parents by the school is very good. The school brochure is attractively designed, reader-friendly, and provides good quality information concerning every facet of school life. The Governing Body's annual report to parents provides a very good summary of events for the previous academic year. It contains relevant and detailed information and complies with all statutory requirements.
50. Parents are provided each year with a written report which details progress made by pupils, subject by subject, and also provides information on personal and social development.

Reports are comprehensive, very readable, and provide very good quality feedback to parents concerning their children's progress at school. The headteacher provides personalised summary statements for pupils, which very effectively acknowledge their achievements and progress over the previous academic year. The school recognises the scope for further development in informing all parents and pupils about what pupils know in relation to descriptions of National Curriculum levels, and what they should be aiming to achieve within a given period.

51. Parents make a very positive contribution to children's learning, both at school and at home. Parental involvement in school activities very effectively consolidates the home-school link, and this is reinforced by the assistance given by parents with their children's homework. The school provides help and guidance to parents as to how they can most effectively help their children with homework and, most particularly, with reading. The strength of this home-school partnership greatly contributes to the academic and personal development of pupils.

## **HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?**

52. The school is well led and managed by the headteacher and key staff, and this has been maintained since the last inspection despite two changes of headteacher during that period. The current headteacher has been in post for less than two years and has demonstrated significant skills in establishing a calm and caring working environment for adults and pupils. He recognises the considerable strengths of the school and has correctly identified key areas for development in order to raise standards. His leadership ensures clear educational direction, and the deputy headteacher provides strong support.
53. Subject co-ordinators are active in auditing their subjects, identifying needs, planning areas for development and managing budgets. However, the school has not yet developed systematic procedures for them to closely monitor standards and progress in their subjects in each year. As a result, inconsistencies in the progress made by pupils between classes have not been adequately rectified. The allocation of responsibilities and amount of non-teaching time made available for each teacher requires review. All teachers have some management responsibilities and are allocated at least one non-teaching period each week. However, one teacher, who is responsible for monitoring a key stage as well as several subjects, is given too little class release time for her to carry out all her responsibilities effectively. Provision and procedures for pupils with special educational needs are managed well by the co-ordinator for special educational needs. Although there was no significant evidence of inequality of opportunity during the inspection, the school's written policy is unsatisfactory and arrangements for monitoring equal opportunities are weak.
54. The governors are very effective in fulfilling their responsibilities and in shaping the direction of the school. They are ably led by the Chair of Governors, and are well informed of the work and performance of the school. They are supportive of the headteacher and other staff, and their influence contributes significantly to the success with which the school meets its aims.
55. The headteacher and deputy carry out an appropriate programme of monitoring teaching, and the school's arrangements for monitoring its performance are in place. As a result, appropriate areas for improvement have been identified, including the need to raise standards in writing. All staff contribute to the School Improvement Plan, although arrangements for agreeing key priorities and for monitoring the progress of planned improvement are not effective enough. The quality of relationships between staff, together with the shared commitment of teaching and support staff to improve the work of the school, demonstrate the good capacity to succeed.
56. The school makes good strategic use of its resources, including specific grants and other funding, and educational priorities are supported well through careful financial planning. Good account is also taken of the principles of best value when making decisions, and the school's financial arrangements are managed efficiently.
57. The school has a good number of appropriately trained and experienced teaching staff to meet the demands of the curriculum and needs of the pupils. Pupils particularly benefit from music taught by a teacher with considerable expertise in this subject, and pupils with special educational needs benefit from working with a special educational needs teacher. The school is also well provided with learning, administrative and cleaning support staff whose efforts increase the quality of the life and work of the school and of pupils' achievements. The practice of allocating several learning support assistants to work with children in the Reception

class requires review, to increase the extent to which the roles of teacher and assistant are complementary and to ensure consistent learning experiences from day to day. Teaching and support staff are very supportive of one another and work well together to provide a very positive climate for learning.

58. The school building is attractive, well maintained and generally in good order. Plans are in hand to resolve a problem with dampness in two of the classrooms that are located in the original part of the building. The school makes good use of the space available and also uses display space in classrooms and shared areas very effectively to stimulate and celebrate pupils' achievements. The Reception classroom has immediate access to an outdoor space that is used to enhance learning. Plans to enclose the area and provide large toys appropriate for this age group have been unavoidably delayed but are now about to proceed. The external grounds provide plenty of space for the number of pupils and are very attractively designed and maintained. These include hard and grass surfaces, a quiet garden for reflection, and a wildlife area. They provide a high quality environment for both learning and recreation. The school is also well provided with a good range and quality of resources for learning in all subjects.
59. When account is taken of pupils' achievements in subjects and in their attitudes, values and personal development, and the school's unit costs, the school provides good value for money.

### **WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?**

60. In order to continue to improve, the governors, headteacher and staff should now:-

(1) As already identified by the school, improve the rate of progress in pupils' writing by

- raising expectations of the standards pupils can achieve in writing
- increasing opportunities for sustained writing
- improving arrangements for assessing pupils' progress regularly, and using this information to set individual learning targets
- providing more opportunities for pupils to develop their writing skills through learning in other subjects

(Paragraph numbers 4-5, 9-10, 27, 44, 76-77, 82)

(2) Improve the consistency of good and very good teaching throughout the school, especially in Years 1 and 2, and the achievement of high attainers in mathematics, by

- developing lesson planning, especially for the core subjects of English, mathematics and science, to focus clearly on intended learning for all groups of pupils and promote teachers' regular evaluation of teaching and learning within lessons
- reviewing arrangements for continuous assessment, and improving the use of teachers' detailed knowledge of pupils' attainment to match work in lessons closely to their differing stages of learning
- raising expectations of pupils' standards by the end of Year 2, and the achievement of high attainers in mathematics, and monitor their progress more closely

(Paragraph numbers 1, 11, 17, 19, 21, 23, 43, 85, 90)

(3) Improve pupils' standards and progress in ICT by

- continuing to implement the schemes of work for this subject
- making better use of classroom computers to promote learning in all subjects of the curriculum

(Paragraph numbers 4, 9, 120, 122-123)

(4) Implementing systematic procedures for subject co-ordinators to gather good evidence of attainment and progress in each year to inform their identification of strengths and areas for development

(Paragraph numbers 53, 82)

## **OTHER ISSUES WHICH SHOULD BE CONSIDERED BY THE SCHOOL**

- Ensure that a full health and safety risk assessment is carried out in the near future
- As already planned, review and implement the equal opportunities policy

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

### Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	42
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	24

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
2	33	45	19	0	0	0

The table gives the percentage of teaching observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons.

### Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	205
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	3

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	30

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	3
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	3

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.1
National comparative data	4.3

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.2
National comparative data	0.3

Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		2000	12	18

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	12	10	11
	Girls	18	16	17
	Total	30	26	28
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	100 (94)	87 (87)	93 (97)
	National	83 (82)	85 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	12	12	12
	Girls	17	18	17
	Total	29	30	29
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	97 (94)	100 (97)	97 (97)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year.

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		2000	11	14

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	11	10	11
	Girls	14	13	14
	Total	25	23	25
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	100 (94)	92 (74)	100 (87)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	8	9	9
	Girls	13	13	13
	Total	21	22	22
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	84 (87)	88 (81)	88 (90)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	79 (75)

Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year.

### ***Ethnic background of pupils***

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	1
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	0
Any other minority ethnic group	5

*This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.*

### ***Exclusions in the last school year***

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	0	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

*This table gives the number of exclusions of pupils of compulsory school age, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.*

### ***Teachers and classes***

#### **Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	9
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22.8
Average class size	29.3

#### **Education support staff: YR – Y6**

Total number of education support staff	4
Total aggregate hours worked per week	99

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### ***Financial information***

Financial year	2000-2001
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	£
Total income	375899
Total expenditure	392106
Expenditure per pupil	1912
Balance brought forward from previous year	27203
Balance carried forward to next year	10996



## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	205
Number of questionnaires returned	65

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	72	23	3	2	0
My child is making good progress in school.	66	31	3	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	58	38	2	0	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	42	43	8	3	5
The teaching is good.	66	34	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	46	48	6	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	75	23	2	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	74	20	6	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	45	47	6	0	2
The school is well led and managed.	51	43	5	0	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	70	30	0	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	22	35	34	3	6

### Other issues raised by parents

No other issues were raised by more than a very small minority of parents, but individual comments referred to standards and resources for ICT, the support provided by the PTA, extra-curricular activities, the accessibility of staff, and difficulties experienced by one pupil.

## **PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES**

### **AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE**

61. Attainment of children by the end of their time in the Foundation Stage is above what is expected nationally for children of their age, in all aspects of the curriculum. This represents an improvement since the last inspection when attainment was in line with what is expected nationally. Children show above average attainment on entry to the Foundation Stage, particularly in communication, language and literacy and in social skills. They achieve well in the Reception class, with many of them working within Level 1 of the National Curriculum. They are assessed on entry to the Reception class and their progress is monitored throughout the year. Areas for further improvement are noted and addressed. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress, compared with satisfactory progress at the last inspection.
62. Consultations between parents and teachers take place before and after the children join the school. Parents are advised on how they can help to prepare their children for school and support them during their time there. Children visit several times, before they join the school. They enter the school full-time at the beginning of the term in which they will be five. Children who enter full-time in January and April are able to attend on a part-time basis from the previous September.
63. Children make a very positive start to their education in all areas of learning. The quality of teaching and learning is good. This represents a significant improvement since the last inspection, when teaching was unsatisfactory. The teacher's knowledge and understanding of the curriculum and the needs of young children are good and she teaches the basic skills well, enabling children to acquire knowledge, skills and understanding systematically. She plans effectively, has high expectations of work and behaviour and uses time and resources well. Class management is very good and children's interest and concentration are maintained. They apply intellectual and creative effort to their work. The quality and use of ongoing assessment are good. All pupils, including those with special educational needs make good gains in their learning. Children take books home regularly to practise their reading and lists of key words to learn.
64. The quality and range of learning opportunities are good and enriched by visits and visitors. Links with parents are very good. During the week of the inspection, parents came into school to see and hear about the work that the children had done over the past half-term. The children enacted the story of *We're all going on a bear hunt*. They shared with parents their shared story writing about aspects of the *Goldilocks and the Three Bears* story and sang a song about sandwiches, apples, biscuits and juice. The teacher gave the parents a very clear account of the children's work over the half-term; some parents were surprised at the amount that had been accomplished. Parents enjoyed the sandwiches, cakes and jellies made by their children at a teddy bears' picnic.
65. The Foundation Stage is well led by an experienced co-ordinator, who is sensitive to the needs of the children and introduces them to a wide range of experiences. Three classroom assistants assigned to the Foundation Stage work hard for the benefit of the children during specific periods each day but, ideally, children of this age need the stability of contact with one familiar person, such as a nursery nurse or classroom assistant, throughout each day, rather than having constant changes of personnel. Provision within the Foundation Stage is good, but a key issue from the last inspection regarding the need for adequate resourcing has only partially been resolved. The outdoor area lacks climbing equipment, wheeled vehicles and other equipment needed to extend the indoor activities and enable children to develop their co-ordination, control and awareness of space and others on a daily basis. However, plans are in hand for the necessary improvements to be made.

## **Personal, social and emotional development**

66. The attainment of children in personal, social and emotional development is above expectations for their age by the end of their time in the Foundation Stage. This represents good achievement and progress, especially for those children who have had only a short period of full-time schooling. All children settle very quickly into the routines of the Reception class. They enjoy coming to school and their attitudes are excellent. The calm, welcoming ethos helps them to feel confident and secure. Language development and communication skills are given a high priority. Children are encouraged to listen attentively, to speak clearly and to extend their vocabulary. They contribute ideas to group stories and learn to respect the ideas and contributions of others. In role-play, for example, as they take orders, serve meals and accept payment in the café, they express and communicate their ideas and feelings. They select and use resources independently, including the use of the computer. Their behaviour is excellent and they have a very good understanding of the impact of their actions on others. Their relationships with one another and with adults are excellent. They dress and undress independently and manage their own personal hygiene. They are encouraged to take on an increasing number of responsibilities and they are keen to do so. Their personal development is closely monitored. Parents discuss their children's personal development with the teacher and contribute to the child's Early Learning Record.

## **Communication, language and literacy**

67. The attainment of pupils in communication, language and literacy is above expectations for their age by the end of their time in the Foundation Stage. For a significant minority of pupils, it is well above, particularly in speaking and listening and reading. This represents good achievement and progress since the last inspection, when attainment was average. There are many opportunities for children to develop their speaking and listening skills, as in Circle Time, when they talked about the patio garden that they had created for their entry into the Royal Horticultural Society's 'Greenfinger Challenge'. All adults are effectively involved in helping children to develop their speaking and listening skills, as they interact with them in indoor and outdoor activities. The National Literacy Strategy has been gradually extended and children now experience almost the full hour. Children enjoy listening to stories and join in with enthusiasm. They know how a book is organised and identify the title and author. Successful strategies are used to extend their vocabulary and understanding of grammatical structure. Pupils' reading of simple texts is generally accurate; their rate of progress in reading is good. Children make good progress in their ability to structure stories. They re-tell narratives in the correct sequence, drawing on the language patterns of well-known stories, such as *Goldilocks and the Three Bears*. Most children write simple sentences confidently, such as, 'At football club, I won a medal for scoring ten points', and talk confidently at length about their own feelings and experiences.

## **Mathematical development**

68. The attainment of children in mathematical development is above expectations for their age by the end of their time in the Foundation Stage and they make good progress. This represents good achievement and progress since the last inspection, when attainment was in line with expectations and progress was satisfactory. Initially, there is a short introduction to the Numeracy Framework and this is gradually extended to the full hour. Children say and use number names, in order, in familiar contexts. There are many opportunities for them to develop mathematical language, such as *more, less, greater, smaller, heavier* and *lighter*. They talk about and create simple patterns. They recognise numerals 1 to 9 and find one more or one less than a number from 0 to 10; many children are able to count to at least 50. They are beginning to relate addition to combining two groups of objects and subtraction to taking away, and to use the language associated with adding and subtracting. Numerous activities support mathematical development. The emphasis is on understanding and using numbers in practical contexts. For example, at registration, they use the 100 square and any reduction in class number to reinforce the concept of subtraction. Children use words such as *tiny, small, little, big, tall, large, huge* as they sort teddies according to size. They are encouraged to make estimations and then check for accuracy. Children are familiar with books, games, puzzles, weighing activities and computer programs relating to number. They use developing mathematical ideas to solve practical problems.

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

69. The attainment of children in knowledge and understanding of the world is above expectations for their age by the end of their time in the Foundation Stage and they make good progress. This represents good achievement and progress since the last inspection when achievement was in line with national expectations and progress was satisfactory. Children learn about the layout of the school and the people who work in it. Their knowledge of the locality is extended through visits to the church and the leisure centre, work on road safety and visits from the school nurse, the local children's librarian, Fireman Mike and PC Hill. They learn about the seasons, study trees, harvest fruits, spring growth, water and sand, during local walks at different times of the year. Their knowledge and understanding are extended through visits to Buchan Park and Tilgate Park. They ask sensible questions and listen carefully to the replies, thus developing their understanding of the world beyond their own immediate environment. They look at their own growth from babyhood and learn the parts of the body. In talking about their families, they begin to develop a sense of time and relationships. Their knowledge of different cultures and beliefs is developed through stories. Children are introduced to scientific ideas through studying materials and learning about light, colour and growth. They develop their knowledge of irreversible change as they make bread, and learn what dissolving means as they make jellies. They identify living and non-living things, observe and identify features of the natural world and grow seeds and bulbs to study new growth. Children use computers to support their work. They can enter text, furnish the rooms of the three bears' cottage and, with help, save and print out their work. They build and construct. Their mathematical knowledge is increased as they weigh out the ingredients to make and ice cakes.

### **Physical development**

70. The attainment of children in physical development is above expectations for their age by the end of their time in the Foundation Stage and they make good progress. This represents good achievement and progress since the last inspection, when attainment was in line with expectations and progress was satisfactory. Children progressively develop their ability to move with confidence, imagination, control and co-ordination, in safety. They become increasingly aware of space, of themselves and others, as they travel around, under, over and through balancing and climbing equipment, using a range of small and large equipment. They move to music with developing confidence, imagination and control. They design, make and use a pirate game, using large apparatus and enjoy playground games from the past. They are beginning to recognise the importance of keeping healthy and the things that contribute to a healthy lifestyle and recognise changes that happen to their bodies when they are active. They handle tools, objects, construction and malleable materials safely and with increasing control.

### **Creative development**

71. The attainment of children in creative development is broadly in line with expectations for their age by the end of their time in the Foundation Stage and they make good progress. This represents good achievement and progress since the last inspection, when attainment was barely in line with expectations and progress was unsatisfactory. Children explore and experiment with ideas, materials and activities. They explore colour and texture through a range of resources and sensory experiences, talk about their observations and draw and paint themselves and others. Using different shapes and materials, they make very effective collages of *The Hungry Caterpillar*, *Ten in a Bed* and *The Three Bears'* cottage. They talk confidently about similarities, differences and patterns and investigate what happens when they mix colours and use paints of different consistencies. Children explore form and shape in two and three dimensions, as they create models and extend their knowledge of joining techniques. They begin to recognise and name musical instruments and investigate how sounds can be changed. They recognise repeated sounds and sound patterns and communicate their ideas through music. All children listen carefully to short extracts of music and speak about them simply in musical terms. They sing a repertoire of songs with enjoyment and developing control and use instruments to play contrasts and create their own music.

## ENGLISH

72. The year 2000 National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 2 showed standards in reading well above those attained nationally, and above the average for similar schools. In writing, standards were above the national average, and in line with those attained by similar schools. National test results at the end of Year 6 showed standards well above both the national average and the average for similar schools. The rate of improvement in standards over the last five years has been above the national trend at Key Stage 1 and in line with the national trend at Key Stage 2.
73. The evidence from inspection shows a slightly different picture, with above average attainment at both key stages. This does not indicate a decline in the standards of either teaching or learning in Years 3 to 6 but reflects the fluctuations that occur from year to year in a school of this size.
74. Speaking and listening skills are well above average at both key stages. By the age of seven, pupils talk and listen confidently. Their relevant comments and questions, for example in whole-class discussions, show that they listen effectively. They demonstrate a capacity to explain their ideas clearly to others and use an extensive vocabulary for their age. By the age of eleven, pupils display their well-developed speaking skills in a wide range of contexts, including giving formal presentations to others. In discussion, they pay close attention to what others say, ask questions to develop ideas and make contributions that take account of others' views.
75. Reading skills are above average at both key stages. Year 2 pupils read story books accurately, and many with good levels of fluency. They talk confidently about the main ideas and characters, and discuss their preferences. They have well-developed strategies for reading unfamiliar words and know how to find information from books and libraries. Year 6 pupils read a range of fiction accurately and with clear enjoyment. They show good levels of understanding, using inference and deduction where appropriate, and selecting passages from the text to support their views. They are competent in using both the library and ICT to locate and use information.
76. Standards in writing are broadly average, although higher attainers achieve above average standards. By the age of seven, pupils communicate their ideas clearly in stories, diaries and letters. They attain sound standards in spelling and punctuation, and use a style of handwriting that is joined and legible. Higher attainers extend their ideas logically in sequences of sentences, but a significant minority of pupils express their ideas only through simple words and phrases. By the age of 11, most pupils attain the expected level in writing. They sustain and develop their ideas in a range of forms, including story, playscript and autobiography. Higher attainers sustain and extend their ideas, showing a secure grasp of their chosen form, and using vocabulary imaginatively and with precision. A greater proportion of pupils should achieve this standard, above the expectation for their age. Spelling is generally accurate, and pupils are beginning to use punctuation accurately within the sentence.
77. Generally, children demonstrate knowledge and skills in communication, language and literacy that are above average when they enter the Reception class, notably in their speaking skills. Overall, they make sound progress in the subject in Years 1 and 2 and good progress in Years 3 to 6. However, achievement in writing is not as good as in other aspects of the subject and should be better. There is no significant variation in the progress made between different groups of pupils. Those with special educational needs make good progress in achieving the literacy and other targets in their individual education plans.
78. The quality of both teaching and learning in English is good overall, but is stronger in Years 3 to 6 than in Years 1 and 2. During the inspection, teaching was at least satisfactory in all lessons seen in this subject, and in two lessons in three teaching was good or very good. Teachers have good levels of subject expertise and use effective teaching methods. As a result, pupils make good gains in their skills, knowledge and understanding across a broad range of speaking and literacy experiences. This includes preparing and giving talks to others, developing an argument in a letter, and writing autobiographies. Teachers manage pupils very effectively and make good use of time, support staff and resources. They quickly engage pupils' interest from the beginning of lessons, and their concentration is maintained through whole class, group and individual activities. Support staff are also used well to ensure that

pupils with special educational needs are able to complete their tasks successfully. As a result, no time is wasted and all pupils work very productively.

79. However, in spite of the high quality of teaching and learning in individual lessons, this does not result in strong teaching and learning over the longer term. The quality of teachers' lesson planning is variable in matching work closely to the differing learning needs of pupils within the class and, as a result, some groups make better progress than others within individual lessons. This is because there are shortcomings in the school's arrangements for assessing and recording pupils' progress and using this information to ensure that learning builds systematically on the existing skills and knowledge of each pupil.
80. Characteristic strengths of very good teaching were exemplified in a Year 5 lesson in which pupils explored alternatives for the word *said* when writing dialogue, and wrote successfully in the style of E. B. White. An initial review of the previous lesson prepared pupils well to build on their existing knowledge. The teacher had an excellent rapport with the pupils, established a very positive working ethos within the class, and skilfully judged the timing of each part of the lesson. The lesson included a variety of learning experiences including pair work, class discussion, listening to a story, and independent writing. As a result, the pupils were deeply engaged and this was sustained throughout. They approached each activity eagerly and confidently, and worked productively throughout the lesson. The effective support provided by the special educational needs teacher, together with careful monitoring of pupils' efforts by the class teacher, meant the task met the needs of all pupils. The teacher's dramatic reading of a carefully selected extract from *Charlotte's Web* resulted in gasps from the pupils and they were highly motivated to write the end of the chapter for themselves. Their writing showed the very good progress made in selecting interesting alternatives to *said*, and in writing in a given style.
81. There has been sound improvement since the last inspection, particularly in implementing the National Literacy Strategy and in raising standards in national tests at Key Stage 1. There has also been recent improvement in adapting the National Literacy Framework to meet the needs of the school's pupils more closely.
82. The school provides an appropriate curriculum that meets statutory requirements, and makes sound use of ICT. Teachers exploit opportunities to promote literacy through learning in other subjects but the extent of this varies between classes. History, for example, is used particularly well to extend writing skills in Year 6. Overall, pupils are given too few opportunities for sustained writing to help them make good progress in their writing skills. English is managed satisfactorily by the co-ordinator, who has several responsibilities within the school and whose effectiveness is constrained by the practicalities of monitoring all of these areas. However, there is careful analysis of national test results and this information is used effectively to evaluate and modify the curriculum. As a result, writing has already been identified as an area requiring improvement and appropriate development has been planned. The co-ordinator needs to be able to monitor standards and progress more closely to ensure that pupils in all classes achieve well in this subject.

## **MATHEMATICS**

83. In the Year 2000 National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 2, pupils attained standards that were in line with the national average, thus maintaining the position at the last inspection in 1997. Standards in 2000 were below the average for similar schools. The percentage of pupils achieving standards above those expected for pupils aged seven was close to the national average. Average scores vary from year to year, in relation to the comparatively small cohort and the number of pupils with special educational needs. Scores declined sharply in 1999, but improved to being close to the national average in 2000. Over the three years 1998 to 2000, the performance of boys has exceeded that of girls by the equivalent of one term's work; the difference was less significant in 2000. The issue has been closely monitored and the gender difference does not appear to be significant in the current cohort.
84. In 2000, pupils achieved standards in national tests at eleven that were well above the national average and in line with the average for similar schools. This represents an improvement since the last inspection, when attainment was above the national average. The percentage of pupils achieving standards above those expected was above the national average in 2000. Standards in mathematics gradually declined from above the national average in 1996 to being in line with the national average in 1999, but improved considerably in 2000. Over the years

1998 to 2000, the performance of girls has exceeded that of boys by the equivalent of half a term's work. In 2000, however, girls out-performed boys by the equivalent of one and a half term's work. In the current cohort, the gender difference does not appear to be significant.

85. Inspection findings show that standards at both key stages remain the same as in 2000, that is, in line with the national average for seven year old pupils and above the national average for eleven year old pupils. The achievement of pupils is satisfactory for seven year old pupils and good for eleven year old pupils, thus maintaining the position at the last inspection. Progress made by pupils with special educational needs and by gifted and talented children is satisfactory for seven year old pupils. Progress made by pupils with special educational needs is good for eleven year old pupils. Progress made by gifted and talented pupils is satisfactory for eleven year old pupils.
86. Numeracy skills are taught well. There is a strong emphasis on mental computation. All pupils benefit from regular practice at the start of lessons and pupils' understanding of mental strategies is satisfactory at Key Stage 1 and good at Key Stage 2. Where teaching is good or better, teachers use carefully targeted questions to encourage all pupils to take an active part. Teachers understand the importance of asking pupils to explain their reasoning. For example, pupils in Year 1 explain that, in order to add 8 to 6, they first add 4 to make it up to 10 and then add another 4. Most pupils are able to explain their methods clearly to the rest of the class.
87. During the inspection, pupils in Year 1 developed their mental strategies to solve simple problems with regard to capacity. Some pupils found the concept difficult and were not sufficiently targeted when they did not contribute voluntarily. Year 2 pupils made good progress in recognising relationships between short units of time such as seconds, minutes and hours and longer units such as days, weeks and months. They received very good support during group work, enabling misunderstandings to be addressed and progress to be made. Pupils in Year 3 developed their understanding of place value and their ability to multiply two-digit numbers by 10 and 100. Year 4 pupils consolidated their understanding of reflective symmetry in two-dimensional shapes and reflections through practical activities and the use of a computer to support a pupil with specific learning difficulties. Pupils in Year 5 made very good progress in their ability to change fractions to decimals and then to percentages, owing to very good teaching. Year 6 pupils also made very good progress in solving problems by representing, extracting and interpreting data in tables, graphs, charts and diagrams. For example, they worked out the best time to fly from London to reach various cities between 6 p.m. and 7 p.m., in the process developing their knowledge about world time zones, e.g. New York is 5 hours behind the United Kingdom and flight times are about 8 hours.
88. The school has recognised the need to improve provision of opportunities for children to use and apply mathematics - for example, in science. The mathematics and science co-ordinators have attended a course on this and further in-service training in mathematics is planned for all staff. The co-ordinator is monitoring teaching and learning in data handling to ensure better progression and pupils' work is being tracked from year to year, to ensure consistency with National Curriculum requirements. Analysis of pupils' work shows that these initiatives are having a positive impact, but they have not yet been in place long enough to be effective in raising attainment significantly.
89. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2. It was satisfactory in one lesson observed, good in one lesson and very good in a third lesson, but the analysis of work shows that the rate of progress could be better. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory gains in learning. The most able pupils are not achieving their potential, particularly in data handling and using and applying mathematics. The quality of teaching and learning is good in Years 3 to 6 and teachers successfully raise achievement from average to above average standards and, as a result, standards are successfully raised from average to above average levels by the age of 11. Teaching was good in one lesson observed and very good in three lessons observed. Pupils with special educational needs make good gains in learning.
90. There has been some improvement since the last inspection, when teaching at both key stages varied from unsatisfactory to good. Teachers' knowledge and understanding and their teaching of basic mathematical skills are satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 and good in Years 3 to 6, enabling pupils to develop their knowledge, skills and understanding well at Key Stage 2. Teachers' short-term planning is satisfactory, but does not take sufficient account of assessment. Although most teachers carry out ongoing assessment of pupils' understanding through targeted questions in oral sessions, they do not make effective use of assessment

information to inform future planning and take sufficient account of the needs of individual pupils. Pupils are not given enough opportunities to manage their own target setting or assess their own learning.

91. In Years 1 and 2 teachers' expectations are satisfactory, with the result that pupils work at a sound pace. Teachers use appropriate teaching methods and manage pupils well, so that pupils apply a good level of intellectual and creative effort to their work. Time, support and resources are used satisfactorily and promote the sound progress pupils make. In Years 3 to 6 teachers' expectations are high, and they use well-chosen teaching methods so that, as a result, pupils show very good levels of interest, concentration and independence, and achieve well.
92. The quality and range of learning opportunities are satisfactory at both key stages. The appropriate statutory curriculum is in place and it is broad, balanced and relevant. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. There is equality of access and opportunity for all pupils. There is satisfactory provision for pupils to apply their mathematical skills, knowledge and understanding in other areas of the curriculum. For example, pupils in Year 5 plotted a graph in science to show whether water stops heating at 100 degrees. Pupils use their mathematical skills when measuring and producing nets in DT. Pupils in Year 5 used their mathematical skills when learning about time zones during a visit to the Greenwich Observatory. Pupils will participate in a mathematics week in October, organised by West Sussex, which will further develop their mathematical skills across the curriculum.
93. The subject is very well led by an experienced co-ordinator. She works very hard to raise standards in mathematics. She regularly monitors teaching and learning, and pupils' progress is tracked, as they move through the school. Test results are analysed, the level achieved is compared with the level expected and key areas of weakness are identified. Resources are good and are used well. Owing to the strong shared commitment of the staff to improvement, the school has the capacity to succeed in its determination to raise standards in mathematics.

## SCIENCE

94. Standards achieved in National Curriculum tests in 2000 for pupils aged eleven were similar to those found nationally and to those in similar schools. This is broadly similar to what was found by the last inspection. However, in the summer following that inspection, results in national tests in science were well above those nationally and have been slipping since. Last summer the proportion of pupils attaining higher than the national expectation was less than that found in similar schools. The school has made a priority of halting this trend and has been successful in the short term; the subject has not improved in the long term since the last inspection.
95. Finding that the soil is *dry and crumbly*, pupils in Year 1 know a plant is dying because it lacks water. Guided by their teachers' questions and prepared examples, they know that they must use the same pots, soil and plants to carry out a fair test; it is only the water they must change. They know that the plant would not want tea or lemonade because *water is fresher*. Pupils in Year 2 use knowledge based on observations of spawn in their classroom to complete life cycle wheels, showing six stages in the development of a frog. Scrutiny of their books and discussions with pupils show that they have covered work from all sections of the science curriculum. When pupils record this work it is not always clear if they are working from personal enquiry or repeating what an adult is telling them.
96. Pupils in Year 3 show that they are very adept in setting up a fair test to find out how to grow the longest grass. With little help or prompting most know that they must measure and control all except the variable element. Many form a hypothesis, such as *I think that the pot that has the least grass will grow the tallest because it has most space*. Pupils in Year 5 observed their teacher carefully while she measured the temperature of a pan of water with a thermometer to see if it exceeded boiling point. Two pupils entered data directly onto a computer to demonstrate graphically what was happening. They discussed avidly what was occurring and made a good guess about what might happen. Later, they carried out their own scientific enquiry involving ice and recorded their findings graphically on paper. Although no science teaching was seen with Year 6 pupils, their books demonstrate that they have revised thoroughly all areas of the National Curriculum. Their classroom contains models of pulley systems they have made and investigated. Again, as with pupils in Year 2, it is not always



clear in written work when pupils make findings as a result of their own enquiries or are recording learning gained second-hand.

97. Teaching is always at least satisfactory and most is better. Pupils in Year 3 received a letter from a fictitious relative of their teacher being very rude about her ability to grow grass and asking for their help. This engaged their interest immediately and is typical of the good humour that exists in the relationships between the teachers and their pupils. Teachers usually question rigorously and target many of their questions at specific pupils to challenge their thinking and learning. Lessons are well thought out and teachers prepare thoroughly for them. The pace of lessons is good and effective use is made of the long sessions timetabled so that pupils complete what is required of them.
98. The quality of the leadership and management of the subject is similar to that found during the last inspection. The subject co-ordinator is relatively new in post, inexperienced and not a science specialist. She is attending training to improve her knowledge and understanding, and so that she can guide the work of colleagues. She makes good use of support from external advisers. The school has adopted the QCA scheme for science to provide a secure framework for planning throughout the school and to enable the co-ordinator to ensure that resources are readily available. The co-ordinator has good knowledge of what is happening throughout the school despite not formally monitoring planning and teaching regularly.
99. The school recognised that there were problems with science and took steps to address them. A weakness shared with mathematics is in the area of enquiry and investigation. Both co-ordinators attended training and have brought about improvements by introducing what they learnt into all classes. The school provided additional teaching help to boost pupils' attainments in the tests for eleven year olds and this appears to have been successful. The subject continues as a priority in the school's improvement plan but this needs rigorous, measurable targets to demonstrate when success has been achieved.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

100. Pupils throughout the school achieve well in this subject and attain standards above the expected levels for their age. By the age of seven, pupils show careful attention to detail in their observational drawings of fruit and vegetables, and bicycles. They use a computer program to paint a picture in the style of Jackson Pollack, learn collage techniques, work with fabrics, and create Christmas card designs. By the age of 11 pupils experiment with colour mixing and produce accurately observed drawings. They have made and evaluated large masks for a dramatic production of *Chicken Licken* and these are of high quality. They are familiar with a number of artists such as Van Gogh and Picasso and compare their styles and techniques. The standards of some of the pupils' work is of very high quality, including tiles Year 3 pupils have made, using designs based on the shapes, forms and patterns around the school grounds, and still life studies produced by Year 5 pupils using water colour, pencil, charcoal and chalk. There is no significant variation in the progress made between any groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs.
101. Only two lessons were seen during the inspection but the evidence from these, as well as from discussion with pupils, scrutiny of sketchbooks and work displayed, shows that the quality of both teaching and learning is good. Teachers' good levels of knowledge and understanding of the subject are shown in the high standards pupils achieve in their skills in working with a wide range of media and techniques. Teachers manage pupils very effectively and plan well, providing a rich variety of learning experiences. These put demands on the pupils and are often meaningfully linked to work in other subjects, such as geography and history. As a result, pupils approach their practical activities eagerly and are determined to achieve well. They work with purposeful concentration and take pride in their efforts.
102. Characteristic strengths of teaching were seen in a Year 4 lesson in which pupils considered starting points and explored the viewpoints of artists' work. The use of a Paula Rego painting to extend pupils' awareness of viewpoints helped prepare them for a forthcoming visit to the National Gallery. A well-chosen range of teaching methods engaged pupils' interest throughout as they listened to an extract from *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, studied the work of artists, and worked in groups to depict the arrangement of characters in given pictures. The opportunity for individual pupils to take on the role of 'artist' in organising the arrangement,

and for pupils to evaluate each other's efforts, enabled all groups to improve on their initial efforts. This was a demanding lesson that was carefully planned and successfully managed, resulting in very good quality learning for all pupils. They were deeply engaged, worked very productively and made considerable gains in their understanding of approaches to composition.

103. There has been good improvement in this subject since the last inspection. The above average standards by the age of 11 have been maintained and there has been considerable development in planning schemes of work and then adapting them to take account of the revised National Curriculum. The art curriculum meets statutory requirements and is enhanced by visits to art galleries, opportunities for younger pupils to attend an art club, and opportunities to work with artists such as David Armitage. The subject is satisfactorily managed by the co-ordinator, whose commitment to the subject enthuses both teachers and pupils. She provides additional written guidance to support teachers' expertise across a range of areas including printing, sculpture and textiles. Although there are no formalised systems for her to monitor standards and progress in each year she has identified appropriate areas for development through discussion with teachers and observation of pupils' work displayed throughout the school. A recently introduced procedure for assessing individual attainment has the potential to help teachers match work more closely to pupils' stages of learning.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

104. Standards in both the infants and juniors are above what is expected nationally. Once the teacher had made clear what was required, pupils in Year 1 showed good independence in carrying forward the designing and making of a greetings card with a pop-up mechanism. Pupils in Year 4 based their work on a useful display of purses and wallets to prompt ideas for containers for money or credit cards. They too pursued their efforts with a high degree of independence. They cut and sew fabrics well. Year 6 pupils continued a project on mechanisms to make fairground rides work by following instructions to make a solar powered carousel and other battery-powered rides from a commercial kit. They showed good understanding and perseverance in completing these. Scrutiny of work and discussions with pupils confirm that a broad curriculum following a model scheme enables pupils to develop their skills and knowledge as they progress through the school.
105. The small amount of teaching seen was of a good standard. Teachers communicated objectives and instructions very clearly. Knowledge from previous lessons was built on and pupils were clearly familiar with routines for using equipment. There are very good relationships between teachers and pupils, and humour forms an important part of this. As a result, pupils settle to work very quickly and carry out their learning with enthusiasm and enjoyment. Teachers monitor pupils carefully as lessons develop to ensure that good progress is being made.
106. There have been improvements in the subject since the last inspection. Standards are higher in the infant classes, there is now no unsatisfactory teaching and attention has been paid to long- and medium-term planning. The subject is led by a co-ordinator who has been in post for only a year. She also co-ordinates art and design and has fostered links between these subjects and with ICT. She has attended a number of courses to further her own expertise and has been effective in benefiting all teachers with what she has learned. The subject now has a firm base in the QCA scheme of work and in the quality of resources provided and organised by the co-ordinator. The kitchen no longer used for school meals is being developed as a resource for pupils and appropriate food handling qualifications are being gained. Pupils have participated in competitions arranged by local engineers. This has given them the benefit of meeting and working with other pupils and gaining useful resources for the school. The co-ordinator does

not monitor planning regularly and sees only teaching that coincides with her release time. To further promote standards in the subject, it would be useful if a programme of monitoring all planning and teaching could be devised and carried out.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

107. During the inspection, geography lessons were observed in Year 5 and Year 6 but, owing to timetabling arrangements, it was not possible to observe any lessons in other classes. Further evidence was obtained from an examination of pupils' work, teachers' planning, pupils' reports, resources, photographic evidence, current displays and a discussion with the co-ordinator.
108. The attainment of pupils, at the age of seven, is above expectations for their age. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress. This represents good achievement and progress since the last inspection, when attainment was in line with expectations and progress was satisfactory. Pupils have a good knowledge of the school environment, the immediate locality and the natural world. They make plans and maps of the school and their route to school, drawing on knowledge gained from walks around the school, the school grounds and the local area. Pupils in Year 1 make links with mathematics as they produce block graphs of different areas of the school, such as car parks and gardens. They consider where it is safe to cross roads and what the road signs mean. They think about how the area could be made safer. Pupils in Year 2 develop their skill in using maps. They obtain information from a variety of sources. Pupils investigate and compare the Isle of Struay in Scotland with East Grinstead and gain experience in describing places and how people use them. They compare Brighton as a modern seaside resort with what it was like in the 1950s, and consider how seaside holidays have changed. Pupils become aware that the world extends beyond their own locality, through news and holidays. They trace the origins of postcards 'received' from Barnaby Bear and photographs taken on his visits with staff to other places in this country and abroad.
109. The attainment of pupils, at the age of eleven, is above expectations for their age. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress. This represents good improvement since the last inspection, when attainment was in line with expectations and progress was satisfactory. Pupils in Year 3 study weather around the world, thus extending their knowledge beyond their own locality and improving their mapping skills. They also look at geographical aspects of Egypt, in relation to their historical study of Ancient Egypt. Pupils in Year 4 study Chembakolli, a village in India, and compare the physical features and way of life with that in East Grinstead after completing a study of the local area. Pupils in Year 5 are able to explain the course and uses of rivers. They have a good understanding of the water cycle. In a lesson observed during the inspection, they put considerable thought into considering the issue of wasting water. For homework, they are keeping a diary for a week to record how much water is used in their homes based on given figures. They consider what happens to water when it has been used, in preparation for a visit to the local Water Treatment Works. Pupils in Year 6 posed geographical questions and extended their knowledge and understanding of places and their mapping skills as they used atlases, maps and the Internet to find information about the Isle of Wight. They developed their literacy skills of scanning, as they sought information prior to their week's residential visit to Bembridge, on the Isle of Wight. They used their mathematical skills to estimate and measure the distance to be travelled between East Grinstead and the Isle of Wight.
110. The quality of teaching and learning is good, overall, at both key stages. It was very good in both the lessons observed in the junior classes. Although no lessons were observed in either Year 1 or 2, other inspection evidence indicates that the quality of teaching and learning is good. At the last inspection, there appears to have been insufficient evidence to make a judgement on teaching and learning. Throughout the school, teachers' knowledge and understanding are good and they teach geographical skills well, enabling pupils to develop their knowledge and understanding and increase their skills. Teachers plan effectively and their high expectations encourage pupils to put intellectual and creative effort into their work. The methods that teachers use are effective in enabling all pupils, including those with special educational needs, to learn well. Work is differentiated for less able pupils and they receive good support. It is also differentiated for more able pupils, but the level of work is not always sufficiently challenging for them. Learning objectives are communicated clearly at the beginning of the lesson, but pupils are not always encouraged to assess the extent to which they have been achieved. Most pupils have a sound knowledge of their learning.
111. Teachers manage pupils very well and the excellent behaviour and relationships that prevail are instrumental in promoting learning. Time and resources are used well and pupils work at a good pace. Teachers deploy support staff effectively and their targeted support enables less able pupils to learn well. Pupils' understanding is assessed through questioning during oral sessions, but assessment opportunities are not included in weekly planning or used to inform future work, according to individual needs. Homework is used effectively to reinforce and extend learning, where appropriate. Teachers support the development of pupils' literacy skills

through discussion, research and writing. Mathematical skills are developed through the production of weather charts and graphs and investigations of distance and time. Information and communication technology is sometimes used to produce graphs and the Internet and CD Roms are used for research purposes. All work is marked, but the practice of making detailed comments to help pupils to progress is inconsistent.

112. The quality and range of learning opportunities are satisfactory. The curriculum is appropriately balanced and meets statutory requirements. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. Opportunities are also provided for pupils to consider moral issues in relation to their own environment, for example, with regard to pollution and in their study of countries which are considerably poorer than the United Kingdom, such as India.
113. The role of the co-ordinator is developing well. She is enthusiastic and knowledgeable. She has recently trialled a new scheme of work based on national guidance, which provides a good basis for teachers' planning and is having a positive impact on attainment in ensuring improved continuity and progression. Resources are good and are used well. The curriculum is supported by visits to places of geographical interest, such as the Thames Barrier, the Water Treatment Works, Ashdown Forest and the Isle of Wight. The co-ordinator has had only limited opportunities to monitor teaching and learning.

## **HISTORY**

114. During the inspection, a history lesson was observed in Year 3 but, owing to timetabling arrangements, it was not possible to observe any lessons in other classes. Further evidence was obtained from an examination of pupils' work, the policy and scheme of work, long-term, medium-term and short-term planning, pupils' reports, resources, photographic evidence, current displays and a discussion with the co-ordinator.
115. The attainment of pupils, at the age of seven, is above expectations for their age. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress. This represents good improvement since the last inspection, when attainment was in line with expectations and progress was satisfactory. Pupils in Year 1 have a good understanding of what homes were like in the past, particularly in Victorian times, and how they differ from homes today. They know how modern toys differ from those in the past and examine artefacts such as wind-up toys and compare them with electronic toys. Year 2 discover how we know about the Great Fire of London. They ask the question, 'Why do we remember Florence Nightingale?' and research the answer. They study seaside holidays in the past, with particular reference to Brighton and compare them with seaside holidays today. The quality of their work is good and they are developing the ability to ask historical questions and find the answers. They are able to identify changes between aspects of the past and the present and are developing a sense of chronology.
116. The attainment of pupils, at the age of eleven, is above expectations for their age. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress. This represents improvement since the last inspection, when attainment was in line with expectations and progress was good. Pupils in Year 3 study the Vikings and the Ancient Egyptians. In a lesson observed during the inspection, they developed their research skills, using reference books effectively to locate key facts. Some pupils took on the identity of an Ancient Egyptian and gathered information on names, clothes, food eaten on a typical day, work carried out by different levels of society and what an average day was like. Other pupils prepared fact cards for gods and goddesses, while a further group researched and prepared a leaflet on keeping healthy in Ancient Egypt. In another session, they examined a 'mummy' borrowed to support their studies and were awed at the sight of it. They are gathering together a class museum on the Ancient Egyptians, for which they show great enthusiasm. Pupils in Year 4 study the Tudors and identify differences between the way of life of the rich and the poor. They carry out local research to discover what life was like in East Grinstead in Tudor times. Pupils in Year 5 study life in Ancient Greece and make links with geographical aspects. They develop their literacy skills of scanning for information and researching from a number of sources. Pupils in Year 6 study the local history of East Grinstead in Victorian times in preparation for comparing it with life in Victorian times on the Isle of Wight and Queen Victoria's connection with the island, during their residential visit. They develop their mathematical skills as they study ordnance survey maps and use coordinates and direction.

117. The quality of teaching and learning is good, overall, at both key stages. It was very good in the lesson observed in Year 3. Although no lessons were observed in other classes, it is possible to ascertain from the evidence listed above that the quality of teaching and learning is good. This represents good improvement since the last inspection, in Years 1 and 2, where teaching was satisfactory and maintains the good achievement and progress at the last inspection, in Years 3 to 6. Teachers' knowledge and understanding are good and they teach historical skills well, enabling pupils to develop their knowledge and understanding and increase their skills. Teachers plan effectively and their high expectations encourage pupils to apply intellectual and creative effort to their work. The methods that teachers use are effective in enabling all pupils, including those with special educational needs, to learn well. Work is differentiated for less able pupils and they receive good support. It is also differentiated for more able pupils, but the level of work is not always sufficiently challenging for them. Learning objectives are communicated clearly at the beginning of the lesson, but pupils are not always encouraged to assess the extent of their achievement. Most pupils have a sound knowledge of their learning. Time and resources are used effectively and pupils work at a good pace. Support staff are used well. Pupils' understanding is assessed through questioning during oral sessions, but assessment opportunities are not included in weekly planning or used to inform future work, according to individual needs. Homework is used effectively to reinforce and extend learning, where appropriate. Pupils in Year 3 develop their literacy skills through research and imaginative writing (for example, from the point of view of an ancient Egyptian). Computers are used for research purposes. All work is marked, but the practice of making detailed comments to help pupils to progress is inconsistent.
118. The quality and range of learning opportunities are satisfactory. The appropriate statutory curriculum is in place. The breadth, balance and relevance of the curriculum are satisfactory. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. Opportunities are provided for pupils' social development as they carry out research in pairs and groups.
119. The co-ordinator is enthusiastic and is developing the role well. Recent improvement includes the introduction of the QCA scheme of work, which has the potential to raise standards. The curriculum is enriched by visits to places of interest, such as Hever Castle in connection with the Tudors, the British Museum, with regard to the Ancient Egyptians and the Isle of Wight, in connection with the Victorians. Year 3 pupils recently held a Viking Feast Day, when pupils dressed up as Vikings and made 'Viking' soup. The co-ordinator has not, as yet, had any opportunity to monitor teaching and learning.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

120. Standards throughout the school are broadly in line with what is expected nationally in the work seen. This is an improvement on what was found during the last inspection. However, not all the required aspects of the curriculum have been taught to all pupils yet. The long-term plan was introduced only in the last year and there has not been time to complete the full cycle of work.
121. Pupils in Year 1 produce pictograms of their journey to school while in Year 2 pupils produce colour and black-and-white artwork using a paintbox program. Examples of their word processing appear on displays and in books. In the lower juniors, pupils use a data-handling programme to collect and analyse information about themselves. Year 3 pupils analyse their use of a simulation game and compose music; pupils in Year 4 cut and paste text to make its meaning clearer. They display information about themselves in a variety of graphs and discuss these to choose the most appropriate form for different audiences. Year 5 pupils use a spreadsheet to price a Christmas meal. All these examples link appropriately with other subjects and meet what is expected for each age group. Year 6 pupils use information from a variety of newspapers to produce a database of 'World Weather'. During the inspection, they used the Internet successfully to research the travel and venue for their forthcoming school journey.
122. Not enough teaching was seen during the inspection to make a judgement about its strengths and weaknesses. Older pupils benefited from being taken by a parent helper to use a suite of four computers located in 'The Base'. There is a computer in each of the classrooms but these were not seen in use regularly. In one class, younger children were very disciplined in taking turns so that a group of eight made good use of one machine. Short-term planning does not

always identify when useful links with ICT can be made and used, and more opportunities could be taken for pupils to apply their skills and understanding.

123. The school has gone a long way towards redressing a major weakness identified in the last report when the requirements of the National Curriculum were not being met. Teaching and learning are now more secure across the school through the adoption of the QCA scheme of work and a published scheme to support it. The co-ordinator has been in post for almost three years and has worked hard to develop her own and other teachers' skills through training and support. Although space in classrooms and in the school is limited, the school has a barely adequate number of computers to meet the needs of the subject. These could be used more creatively to give pupils access by, for instance, grouping workstations so that a larger group from a class could be together. Parents have always helped in providing computers for the school and one has recently run a marathon, raising enough in sponsorship to provide six more machines. A larger number of machines in one place would be likely to improve teaching and learning in the subject. To further promote standards it would be useful if a programme of monitoring planning and teaching could be implemented. This is particularly important where the expectation is that ICT promotes learning in all other subjects.

## MUSIC

124. Music is a strength of the school, and standards are well above the expected levels for pupils of all ages. Although no lessons were seen in Year 2, evidence from pupils' work in books and displays shows they have made their own drums of high quality and used these to perform in a group performance. They discriminate between loud and soft sounds, respond to music through art, and listen carefully and respond to Prokofiev's *Peter and the Wolf*, matching characters to instruments. Year 6 pupils listen and respond to Mussorgsky's *Pictures at an Exhibition*, show knowledge of concepts such as harmony, concord and discord, pulse and pattern. They work with standard notation, generate and maintain their own ostinato accompaniments, compose melodies, are able to improvise rhythmic patterns and also lead a group. Singing throughout the school is of high quality. Pupils show obvious enjoyment in their singing, which shows sensitivity, clarity and accurate pitch.
125. The quality of both teaching and learning is very good and pupils throughout the school make very good progress in music. In the three lessons seen during the inspection, teaching was very good in two and excellent in the third. All classes benefit from being taught by a teacher with considerable expertise in the subject, who is able to ensure that pupils make very good gains in the skills, knowledge and understanding of all aspects of the curriculum. She has very high expectations of pupils' capacity to understand and use technical vocabulary, to attain high standards of performance, and also to support and extend each other's learning through working collaboratively. Pupils are given challenging tasks and well-judged time targets in which to complete them. As a result pupils work with intense concentration and levels of motivation to successfully complete the tasks they are given. These strengths of teaching were seen in a Year 6 lesson in which pupils worked in groups to develop and perform their own simple rhythmic patterns, taking account of timbre and duration. The pupils' commitment to achieving this demanding task resulted in all working with serious endeavour throughout the lesson. Their attitudes and working relationships in groups of up to seven were outstanding. As a result, all groups made excellent progress during the lesson. Group performances were of very high quality. Pupils worked with untuned percussion instruments, particularly drums, and also used sounds they could generate with their own hands and mouths. All pupils performed and maintained their own parts skilfully, even during periods of silence. Instruments were played with considerable technical skill, and high standards were also achieved in accurate rhythms and effective use of dynamics.
126. There has been an excellent rate of improvement in this subject since the last inspection and this is seen in significantly higher standards, better quality teaching, and improvements in planning and resources. The subject is managed well by the co-ordinator who, because she teaches music in all classes, is well informed of the standards and rates of progress in each year group. She identifies areas for improvement and plans appropriate development as seen, for example, in current plans to improve the use of ICT in the subject. The school provides a very broad and balanced music curriculum for all its pupils which meets statutory requirements. It is enriched by opportunities for pupils to participate in concerts and festivals, including presentations at Christmas, as well as to witness performances by expert musicians. A significant proportion of pupils take up the opportunity to have specialist instrument tuition in

violin, cello, flute and clarinet. There is no recorder group at present. The recent introduction of a system for assessing and recording the attainment and progress of each pupil has the potential to raise standards even further.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

127. Pupils attain standards at least in line with national expectations in the infants. Most pupils in Year 1 throw a ball fairly accurately most of the time to partners for them to hit with a variety of bats. They talk productively to help improve their own and others' performance. By the time they leave the juniors, pupils attain higher standards than are expected nationally. Year 3 pupils carry out a good range of athletic activities by walking, running, jumping and throwing, improving their performance as they work. In Year 4, pupils work well in groups to devise games based on rounders. They show good levels of skill in using bats and balls in unusual ways as they experiment to find rules for their innovative games. In Year 6, pupils work diligently on drills to improve their rounders skills before applying these in a full game. They have a good understanding of tactics and teamwork when fielding, and show superior throwing and hitting skills. All pupils swim the required 25 metres before they leave the school. Other aspects of the curriculum were not being taught during the inspection.
128. Teaching is always at least satisfactory and most, particularly in the junior classes, is good. Teachers set a good example by changing into appropriate kit and demonstrating skills where necessary. They put a lot of thought into providing stimulating and enjoyable lessons, with an emphasis on developing skills. As a result, pupils improve in what they do within lessons and over time. Objectives for activities are clear and equipment is well organised. Pupils therefore know what is expected of them and waste little time. Teachers have high expectations of older pupils and they respond by behaving very well, working together very effectively and taking every opportunity to succeed.
129. Given that the school has adopted the QCA scheme of work to guide its planning and that there is no unsatisfactory teaching, there has been improvement since the last inspection. This applies also to improved attainments by the time pupils leave the school. The subject co-ordinator took up post recently but has expertise and makes good use of external advice. More detailed planning for each of the attainment targets is increasingly supporting the QCA scheme. There are good resources and accommodation, including a field, hall with fixed and moving gymnastics apparatus, and marked outdoor hard areas to support teaching and learning.