

INSPECTION REPORT

UPTON JUNIOR SCHOOL

Broadstairs

LEA area: Kent

Unique reference number: 118489

Headteacher: Mr R Potter

Reporting inspector: Mr A Everix
23079

Dates of inspection: 11th – 15th June 2001

Inspection number: 191350

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

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	7-11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Upton Junior School Edge End Road Broadstairs Kent
Postcode:	CT10 2AH
Telephone number:	01843 861393
Fax number:	01843 866049
Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr W D. Peppiatt
Date of previous inspection:	20 th January 1997

© Crown copyright 2001

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that all extracts quoted are reproduced verbatim without adaptation and on condition that the source and date thereof are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the School Inspections Act 1996, the school must provide a copy of this report and/or its summary free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
23079	Adrian Everix	Registered inspector	Design and technology Information and communication technology	What sort of school is it? The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils taught? What the school should do to improve further
9595	Susan Cash	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
1503	Terry Browne	Team inspector	Mathematics Physical education	How well is the school led and managed?
13288	Marianne Harris	Team inspector	Science Religious education Music Equal opportunities	
22170	John Viner	Team inspector	English History English as an additional language	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
28069	David Mylroie	Team inspector	Art and design Geography Special educational needs	

The inspection contractor was:

e-Qualitas Ltd, Langshaw, Pastens Road, Limpsfield Chart, Oxted,
Surrey
RH8 0RE

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be raised with the inspection contractor. Complaints that are not satisfactorily resolved by the contractor should be raised with OFSTED by writing to:

The Complaints Manager, Inspection Quality Division,
The Office for Standards in Education, Alexandra House , 33 Kingsway
London WC2B 6SE

REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	5
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
PART B: COMMENTARY	
HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?	9
The school's results and pupils' achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?	10
HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?	12
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?	14
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?	14
HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?	15
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	17
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	18
PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	22

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Upton Junior School teaches boys and girls between the ages of seven and eleven. At the time of the inspection there were 512 pupils on roll, which is a larger number than in most junior schools. Pupils come from a range of social backgrounds and most live in the area near the school. Thirty-eight per cent of eligible pupils will transfer to a selective school in September this year. The proportion of pupils claiming free school meals, a little over eleven per cent, is close to the national average. Twenty-six pupils speak English as an additional language, of which two receive extra teaching support. Thirty-seven per cent of pupils are on the special needs register and seventeen (a little over three per cent) have statements for their needs. The majority of these pupils have various learning difficulties. The proportion on the register is well above the national average. This is reflected in the very wide range of attainment when pupils start at the school. Although it fluctuates from year to year, the most recent test results show that overall attainment on entry to the school is broadly average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This school provides a good standard of education. Overall attainment is similar to that expected nationally with particular strengths in basic numeracy, speaking and listening, music, art and sport. Most pupils behave well and have good attitudes to learning. Teaching and learning are good overall, although wide ranging in quality. The school is well led to ensure there is a positive ethos and a wide range of learning opportunities. It provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- Two-thirds of the teaching observed ranged from good to excellent.
- Pupils develop good attitudes to learning and work hard.
- High standards are achieved in music, art and sport.
- Pupils are helped to become responsible and to get on well with others.
- Good opportunities are provided for a wide range of interests and abilities, including for those pupils who have special educational needs.
- A varied programme of activities outside lessons substantially enriches the curriculum.

What could be improved

- Consistency throughout the school in aspects of teaching so that lessons are always of a high quality. This includes lesson planning, the use of teaching time, homework and marking.
- The overall planning of science to ensure that pupils make better progress in the development of their skills and knowledge.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in January 1997 and, as in this inspection, it provided good value for money. Overall improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory. Attainment in the core subjects has kept pace with the upward trend nationally. Overall standards of behaviour and the quality of teaching have remained good overall. The issues identified for action have been satisfactorily addressed. Work is more challenging but there are still weaknesses in the use of time in a minority of lessons. Assessment procedures are more effective although there are still aspects of teacher's day-to-day recording which are in need of improvement. Spiritual development is now satisfactory and there has been a considerable improvement in cultural education.

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	C	C	C	well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E
Mathematics	A	C	B	B	
Science	C	D	D	D	

In 2000, the overall results were average when compared nationally and with similar schools (those who have similar proportions of pupils claiming free school meals). Results have kept in line with the national upward trend over the past few years. Inspection evidence for current Year 6 pupils indicates that overall standards in reading and writing are close to the national average. Their speaking and listening skills develop well and are higher than those typical nationally. Pupils' basic numeracy and mental arithmetic skills are good, with an above average proportion reaching higher levels in the national tests for mathematics. The standards of work seen in other aspects of mathematics are similar to those expected nationally. In science, the below average test results reflect a lower than expected proportion reaching higher levels in the subject. Standards of work seen in science during the inspection were broadly average with strengths in investigative and experimental work. However, weaknesses in this subject's planning have resulted in the repetition of some work which has restricted the achievement of higher attaining pupils. Targets set for English and mathematics for the 2001 tests are suitably challenging and realistically reflect the school's ongoing assessments. The targets set for tests in 2000 were met. Attainment in information and communication technology (ICT) is broadly average. Standards are rising as staff gain confidence teaching in the computer suite. Attainment in history meets national expectations with particular strengths in pupils' understanding of how to find out about the past. Pupils reach high standards in music, art and sport. Pupils with talents in these subjects are helped to fulfil their potential. In other subjects, standards are those expected for the pupils' ages. Overall, pupils achieve well. Test results in English and mathematics in 2000, compared with those when the pupils started at the school aged 7, show that the proportion reaching higher than expected levels has increased. Pupils who have special educational needs and those with English as an additional language make good progress against the targets set for them. In the majority of lessons observed pupils made good progress and built well on their previous achievements.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Nearly all pupils are keen to learn and enjoy coming to school.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good overall. Pupils' behaviour was judged to be good or better in nearly three-quarters of lessons. Occasionally, pupils found it difficult to settle to work and this slowed their rate of learning. Pupils behaved sensibly when moving around the school. Nearly all are polite and considerate.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Most pupils get on well with each other and with adults. The positive relationships amongst members of the school community make a positive contribution to pupils' learning. As they get older pupils take on additional responsibilities which they carry out sensibly.
Attendance	Satisfactory. Attendance rates are similar to the national average.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	Aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	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.

Of the teaching observed, 4 per cent was excellent, 23 per cent was very good, 39 per cent was good, 30 per cent satisfactory and 4 per cent less than satisfactory. The best teaching was in Year 5 where 35 per cent was good and a further 35 per cent was very good or excellent. In the best lessons, work was matched precisely to the needs of pupils and there was a good balance of well-planned activities. This ensured that pupils' pace of learning was maintained throughout the lesson. Good relationships, combined with effective techniques for managing behaviour, ensured that pupils worked hard and concentrated in most lessons. The teaching of numeracy and literacy was good overall. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs was good and past work indicates that the few pupils learning English as an additional language make good gains in their learning. The arrangements for teaching pupils in ability sets are effective in catering for the wide ability range. Overall, the school successfully meets the needs of its pupils. In the few unsatisfactory lessons, the activities did not meet the teaching aims and learning was slow. Although the quality of teaching and learning is good overall, there are aspects which vary in quality between different classes. These include lesson planning, teaching methods, marking and the use of time in lessons. There is not enough joint planning to ensure expertise is shared and consistently good teaching achieved across year groups.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. The balance of subjects is appropriate with an emphasis on the teaching of literacy and numeracy. Clubs, sport, musical activities, educational visits (including residential trips) significantly enhance learning.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Individual education plans for these pupils are well matched to their needs and used to plan suitable work. Good teamwork between teachers and learning assistants ensures that pupils receive effective support.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	The school works closely with visiting specialist staff to ensure these pupils are well supported.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Overall, good provision for personal development. Cultural development is strong and enhanced by very good opportunities in music and regular contacts with European schools. Moral and social development are good. Pupils have many opportunities to learn how to get on with each other in and out of lessons. They are taught about the consequences of actions and to be aware of other's needs. Provision for spiritual development is satisfactory.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school takes good care of its pupils and has successful procedures for promoting good behaviour. Suitable child protection procedures are in place and matters of health and safety are given careful consideration. The occasional incidents of bullying are mostly dealt with effectively. Academic progress is assessed satisfactorily and information used to help place pupils in appropriate teaching

	groups.
--	---------

Partnership with parents

Most parents express positive views about the school. They are kept well informed about what is happening through newsletters and a web-site. Parental involvement in the school is satisfactory. A strong feature is the active parents' association which raises large sums of money for the benefit of pupils. However, only a few parents help in the school. Teachers' inconsistent approach to homework, coupled with the varying degrees of parental support for completing work at home, limit its effectiveness in supporting learning in lessons.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher provides good leadership and is well supported by the deputy headteacher and staff. This contributes to the school's positive ethos and wide range of opportunities for pupils. Overall management is satisfactory but does not ensure consistently high quality teaching in all classes.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors meet their statutory responsibilities. They know the school well and are very supportive of the headteacher and staff. Governors are effective in shaping the direction of the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school has satisfactory arrangements for monitoring and evaluating its performance. Test results are carefully analysed and concerns discussed with staff. Subject leaders monitor teaching and learning, identify weaknesses and produce plans for improvement. However, recent changes in management responsibilities, to address some of the teaching inconsistencies found across the school, have not had time to make a major impact.
The strategic use of resources	Resources are purchased and used to give maximum benefit to pupils and to ensure best value for money. Overall, the school has sufficient staff, satisfactory learning resources and adequate accommodation. Computer equipment is very good. The school field and swimming pool are excellent and very well used. The current library is in a small space and its book stock is below the recommended number. The school has plans to remedy these shortcomings. The majority of rooms are cramped for the number of pupils in classes.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children like school. • The teaching is good. • Children are expected to work hard and do their best. They make good progress. • The staff are approachable. • The school is well led. • There is a good range of activities outside lessons. • The pupils are helped to become mature and responsible. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The frequency and amount of homework. • The information they receive about how well their child is getting on.

The first box contains the views of the vast majority of parents and the second represents the concerns of a significant minority. Inspectors agree with the positive points made by parents. They also agree that improvements are needed in the setting of homework as the school policy is not being followed in every class. Inspectors judge the information provided about children's progress to be satisfactory with suitable arrangements for parents to discuss their children's work. Pupils' end of year reports are satisfactory overall although their quality varies amongst teachers, especially in the precision of the targets set for individual children.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. The school's test results over the past four years have improved in line with the national trend, although they were above the national average in 1998 and below in 1999. In 2000, the overall results were average when compared nationally and with similar schools (those who have similar proportions of pupils claiming free school meals). Compared nationally and with similar schools, results in 2000 were above average in mathematics, average in English and below average in science. Girls' results are better than boys' in English and reflect the national picture. This difference is confirmed from inspection evidence, especially in reading.
2. The latest test results indicate that, the overall attainment of seven year-old pupils starting at the school is average. However, this has varied in the past. The results of 7 year-olds who entered the school in 1996 were broadly average in reading and mathematics but below the national average in writing. In the 2000 tests, when they were eleven, these pupils' overall scores were average in English and above average in mathematics. This improved achievement is also reflected in the larger proportion of pupils reaching higher levels in these subjects in 2000. For example, when aged 7 in 1996, 20 per cent of pupils reached higher than expected levels in the mathematics tests, compared with 31 per cent in 2000 when they were aged 11.
3. In English, pupils achieve standards above those expected nationally in speaking and listening. Reading and writing standards are broadly average. Higher attaining pupils have significant reading skills that enable them to access a wide range of literature and produce written work of particular maturity and sensitivity.
4. Standards in mathematics are above average because of strengths in pupils' attainment in number and mental arithmetic. Higher attaining pupils do well and this is reflected in the above-average proportion of pupils reaching the higher Level 5 in national tests. Pupils' standards are average in the other aspects of mathematics although they do not use their skills sufficiently to solve real life problems.
5. Standards seen in science during the inspection were broadly average, with strengths in investigative and experimental work. However, weaknesses in this subject's planning mean that some work is repeated and this is restricting overall attainment, especially of the most able pupils. This is reflected in the 2000 test results, which were average for pupils achieving the national standard but below average for the higher Level 5.

6. In information and communication technology (ICT), pupils' attainment is broadly in line with that expected nationally. Standards are rising as teachers become more confident in their use of the well-equipped ICT suite. Pupils attain standards in religious education that are in line with those specified in the locally agreed syllabus. Standards in music are well above those expected for the pupils' ages, art is of a high quality and pupils achieve good standards in sport. All three areas are supported by a range of out of school activities, which provide good opportunities for pupils with talents to develop their skills. Attainment in history meets national expectations with particular strengths in pupils' knowledge of how to find out about the past. In geography, standards in pupils' work are similar to that expected nationally. Not enough work was seen in design and technology to make a judgement but a portfolio of design work, and samples of models, indicate that that pupils are learning at appropriate levels for their ages.

7. Over one third of pupils have special educational needs. Although the turnover of pupils is quite low in any one year (about 4 per cent), school records show that between 1996 and 2000 around 50% of pupils joining the school late have special educational needs. Most of these pupils make good progress against the targets set for them and many achieve better than would be expected, bearing in mind their needs. Work from pupils with statements for their needs indicates that they make good progress and achieve well. The few pupils who are taught English as an additional language progress well. Their language development is carefully monitored and support is therefore effectively targeted to meet their needs.

8. Taking all factors into account, pupils are judged to achieve well overall. However, inconsistencies in teaching and learning, and weaknesses in science, indicate that there is potential for even higher achievement.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

9. Pupils have good attitudes to school, which have been maintained since the last inspection. In most lessons they listen well to their teachers and work hard. Almost all pupils say that they enjoy coming to school and they particularly appreciate the good facilities such as the swimming pool and playing field, and the extra-curricular activities offered. Many take part in the various clubs, especially the sport and music groups.

10. In most lessons, pupils' behaviour was good or very good and was never judged to be less than satisfactory. Pupils behaved very well, for example in the swimming pool and in a Year 5 English lesson, when they were riveted by what the teacher was telling them. A Year 3 teacher had borrowed equipment from a neighbouring beekeeper for a science lesson and pupils were enthralled. Pupils get on well together when they work in pairs or small groups, often of mixed gender, as was seen in a Year 5 science lesson and during information and communication technology lessons. A few pupils find it difficult to settle in lessons.

11. Behaviour around the school is usually good. Pupils enter and leave assembly in a quiet and orderly manner. They play together well, particularly when they have use of the extensive playing fields. Pupils respond well to the various incentives, such as Golden Time and weekly class certificates. There have been no exclusions in recent years. No incidents of bullying or racist behaviour were observed during the inspection. However, pupils and a few parents say there have been occasional incidents in the past.

12. Relationships throughout the school are good. These are supported by the good role models of adults in the positive way they speak to and deal with the pupils. Pupils listen

well to each other's points of view and show respect for other's feelings, as was seen in a Year 3 circle time.

13. There are some good opportunities in lessons for pupils to work independently and to show initiative, for example in researching information or planning how to undertake a task. However, this is not consistent throughout the school. Pupils have good opportunities to be responsible for helpful tasks around the classroom and, as they get older, sensibly carry out extra jobs around the school. Each class sends representatives to the school council where issues to do with school are discussed in a mature way. Pupils are nearly always polite and co-operative and most parents agree that they are becoming mature and responsible young people.

14. Levels of attendance are broadly in line with those found nationally. Unauthorised absence is low because the school has good systems for checking why pupils are absent. Punctuality has improved recently and is now good.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

15. The quality of teaching observed ranged from poor to excellent. Four per cent was excellent, 23 per cent very good, 39 per cent good, 30 per cent satisfactory and 4 per cent less than satisfactory. Very effective lessons occurred in all year groups but the highest proportion of very good and excellent teaching was in Year 5. Overall, the teaching of basic skills in numeracy and literacy was good. As in the last inspection, teaching is judged to be good overall but with a significantly lower proportion of unsatisfactory teaching seen on this occasion.

16. Although good overall, there are a number of inconsistencies in aspects of teaching. These distinguished the better quality lessons from those that were satisfactory or, on occasions, less than satisfactory. The most significant weakness is in teachers' lesson planning which varies greatly in its effectiveness. Not enough joint planning of lessons takes place, especially by teachers in the same year group, to ensure that learning is of consistent quality. Some recent lesson planning shows that teachers do not always identify what pupils are expected to learn but merely outline the activities. This is not a satisfactory basis for ensuring that each section of the lesson is precisely targeted and that timing is planned to ensure a good pace to learning. The variations in teaching mental arithmetic highlight some of the differences in teaching methods. In several numeracy lessons, teachers had lively activities which involved pupils using individual number cards and other apparatus. In other classes, learning in this part of the lesson was slower, for example when teachers wrote a list of problems on the board for pupils to solve. Where lesson planning is of a very high quality, for example in one Year 5 class, it had several carefully timed interesting activities to hold pupils' attention, sharply focused learning intentions, key questions to ask pupils, and clearly identified roles for adults in the class.

17. Overall, teachers have a good knowledge and understanding of the various subjects. The high level of expertise of the music specialist is used well and promotes high standards in this subject across the school. Several teachers are improving their knowledge of ICT by working in partnership with a knowledgeable teaching assistant during lessons.

18. Teachers have high but achievable expectations. Tasks are usually challenging and teachers expect pupils to work hard and do their best. This was a strong feature in very good and excellent lessons and is reflected in the high level of effort made by the pupils. In a Year 6 literacy lesson, the teacher reminded the pupils that she expected to have good quality work which some would read out. Remarks such as " Think about what you're

writing, remember it's quality that matters", helped to set a studious tone to the lessons and pupils were motivated to work hard.

19. A good feature of nearly all lessons was the teachers' effective management of pupils. A balanced use of praise and firmness ensured that pupils concentrated on their tasks. Teachers usually assess pupils well during lessons and correct misunderstanding as they arise. However, the quality of marking varies greatly in quality and this is unsatisfactory. Examples of good practice by some teachers include comments with points for improvement or encouraging ones such as, "a nicely structured story with a very dramatic ending". In other instances, work is merely ticked or bland remarks such as "well written" made without focusing on the quality of what pupils have produced.

20. Teachers are usually good at generating pupils' interest and enthusiasm. Questioning at the start of lessons is often used well to start pupils thinking and become actively involved in their learning. For example, in a literacy lesson pupils were asked "Do you like this author's style of writing?", "Which book did you prefer? Why?" and "What don't you like about this story?" In a history lesson for Year 4, the teacher dressed as a jester and involved the pupils in Tudor games. Pupils were entranced throughout the session and rapidly learnt the nature of Tudor entertainment compared with that of the present day.

21. Pupils with special educational needs are taught well in nearly all lessons. Learning support assistants work closely with teachers and are often involved in assessing pupils' work so that the next stage in learning can be planned. This was evident in a Year 5 literacy set working on compound words where the very well-briefed support assistants worked confidently with their groups. Pupils responded warmly to them, worked hard and made good gains in their understanding. In the majority of lessons, teachers use the targets in individual education plans to guide the work they set for pupils. This helps pupils to make good and occasionally very good progress. For example, in a Year 3 art lesson the support assistant worked with a group of pupils with physical difficulties. The work was adapted to give a clear focus on the development of manipulation skills, such as those with scissors; suitable materials including wallpaper were supplied to ensure success. However, targets are not consistently well used in lesson planning and this occasionally results in support assistants not being deployed effectively. For example, in a literacy set for older pupils, the learning assistant's role was not clearly defined and she moved around the class offering general help rather than focusing on the targets for a specific group.

22. It was possible to observe only one lesson for the few pupils who are at an early stage of learning English as an additional language. However, evidence from their past work and records of progress indicate that their rate of learning is good.

23. Although homework was set for pupils during the inspection, there are too many inconsistencies in its use. In some classes, homework diaries and reading records are regularly filled in and parents' comments responded to. In others, very little homework is recorded. In their discussions with inspectors, pupils commented on the different amounts of homework set. A few stated that homework was not always returned or commented upon. Over one-quarter of parents responding to the questionnaire indicated their dissatisfaction with homework.

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

24. The school provides a good range of learning opportunities, enhanced by educational visits and extra-curricular activities. The curriculum is sufficiently broad and balanced to

meet the intellectual, physical and emotional needs of all pupils. Pupils are prepared well for the next stage of their education. Statutory requirements are met in all areas, including religious education, sex education and personal, social and health education. There are significant strengths in the provision of art, music and sports.

25. In Years 3 and 4, pupils are taught in mixed ability classes for literacy and in Year 3 for numeracy. Pupils' tasks are usually well matched to their different levels of attainment. The setting arrangements in the remainder of the school for literacy and numeracy successfully meet the learning needs of all pupils. The support given in the lower sets to those with special educational needs is very effective and the needs of the most able pupils are usually met well.

26. Apart from science, where there is some repetition of work, the overall planning of the curriculum is satisfactory and helps pupils build on their previous learning. The overall strategies for teaching numeracy and literacy skills are sound. Not enough joint year group planning takes place to ensure consistency in the content and use of time in lessons. The last issue is especially significant in some of the longer English and mathematics lessons.

27. The provision for extra-curricular activities is very good. Pupils benefit from an impressive range of clubs and other activities including art, French, sports, music and residential visits. The provision helps the school to meet the needs of pupils with particular talents, especially in sport and music. A good number of children receive musical tuition, mostly by visiting teachers. The choir and orchestra enhance the school's music curriculum. Pupils perform for the school, in festivals and musical events both locally and abroad. The high quality and wide range of sporting activities has helped the school develop a very good reputation for its performance in competitions.

28. The local community makes a good contribution to pupils' learning. Very good use is made of visitors from the local community, including those who take acts of worship. A wealth of visits to places of interest in the locality support a range of subjects. Local groups use the swimming pool and field, which enhances local links, and raises money for the school. The contacts with schools in Europe help pupils to understand the wider community. Pupil exchanges are a particularly positive feature of this work. Good links with other educational establishments have been developed. Staff from the infant and secondary schools work together to help make pupil-transfer a smooth process. The school has strong connections with local providers of teacher training, and student teachers regularly use the school for teaching practice.

29. Pupils with special educational needs are included in all activities. Tasks are usually modified to take account of their needs, particularly in English and mathematics. The individual education plans for these pupils clearly identify what each pupil needs to learn and how this is to be achieved. There is good provision for pupils who speak English as an additional language. The visiting teacher from the Language Support Service ensures that pupils at an early stage of learning English are well supported.

30. The school is effective in ensuring that all pupils are included in the life of the school. In most classes pupils work in mixed gender groups, with much group work being carried out in boy/girl pairings. A very good example of equal access to the curriculum is in music. The teacher has formed a string group for pupils interested in learning an instrument and she is learning alongside these pupils. Extra-curricular activities are available for all pupils to join in, subject to practical limits of space or numbers.

31. Provision for pupils' personal development is good, with particular strengths in the European dimension of cultural development. The provision for spiritual and cultural development has improved since the last inspection.

32. The school now makes sound provision for pupils' spiritual development, mainly through assemblies and religious education lessons. Pupils are encouraged to reflect on how different religious beliefs affect the way people live. They are encouraged to pray in acts of collective worship, which are mainly Christian and regularly led by local clergy from different denominations. Opportunities are taken in some lessons to reflect on work. For example, during a mathematics lesson, pupils stopped to consider the relation of Platonic solids to the universe.

33. Pupils are given many good opportunities to develop their moral understanding and social skills. They learn right from wrong, for instance when discussing the morality of using dancing bears to entertain in Tudor times. They are helped to think through the consequences of their actions, for example when discussing classroom rules and the use of rewards for good behaviour. Disputes are resolved by listening to the other's point of view and by mediation. Pupils are aware of the needs of others and raise large sums of money for a range of charities. A 'Buddy Stop' in the playground has recently been instituted where pupils look out for and support others who are experiencing social difficulties. Circle time is used well in some classes, for example to discuss friendships. The school council provides a good means of involving pupils in sensible decision making. School visits, in this country and abroad, make a very good contribution to pupils' social development, as do the many sporting and musical events in which a large number of pupils are involved.

34. Overall, provision for cultural development is good. The very good music and art provision in the school makes a strong contribution to pupils' cultural development. At the time of the inspection, the choir had just returned from performing in Belgium. The school is maintaining close links with schools in several European countries including Finland, Italy and Spain. This has a positive effect on pupils' understanding and appreciation of other cultures. Festivals such as Diwali, Eid and the Chinese New Year are celebrated and pupils have learnt, for example, about Australian Aboriginal art and they listen to music from around the world.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

35. The school takes good care of the pupils in its charge. Appropriate child protection procedures are in place and the school works well with other agencies when necessary. Matters of health and safety are given careful consideration. Fire drills are carried out regularly and equipment checked. First aid is kindly administered by trained personnel and parents informed of action taken, if this is thought appropriate. All incidents are carefully logged.

36. The school has good systems for monitoring attendance and ensuring that it has explanations for all absences from school. However, there are no formal ways in which pupils are rewarded for good attendance. Punctuality in the mornings deteriorated during the past year but the school took effective action and it is now good.

37. The school has effective ways of promoting good behaviour. Pupils enjoy receiving a class certificate for the week when no one has received a yellow card for poor behaviour. If everyone in the school manages to avoid being given a card during the week, a flag is flown to much rejoicing. Class rules are discussed, agreed and displayed. Teachers use a range of rewards within their classroom and pupils respond well to these. Some enjoy Golden Time on Friday afternoons, others have their names put in the good behaviour box or can add a star to the chart. Pupils and their parents expressed confidence that the few cases of alleged bullying are mostly dealt with quickly and effectively. However, in a very few cases, the school does not follow up incidents persistently enough to satisfy the pupils concerned.

38. Pupils' personal development is monitored effectively because teachers know their classes very well. Any concerns are raised at weekly year group meetings and senior staff are actively involved in supporting those pupils who need extra attention. Pupils expressed confidence that there was someone in school whom they could turn to if they had a problem. The personal, social and health education programme supports pupils' well-being and personal development. It includes sex and drugs education and the police, fire and coastguard services are usefully involved.

39. The school meets the requirements as outlined in pupils' statements of special educational needs. The school effectively tracks the progress made by all pupils on the special educational needs register and, as a result, individual education plans are updated at least termly and more frequently if necessary. The needs of pupils with English as an additional language are carefully assessed. The co-ordinator works closely with the visiting specialist teacher and with class teachers to ensure that they receive correctly targeted support.

40. The school carries out many assessments of pupils to monitor their progress. These include nationally recognised tests at the end of each year, which give a clear indication of how far each child has progressed. Various aspects of English are accurately tracked, for example, through levelled samples of work, in order that staff can monitor individual pupils in writing. The available data is collated effectively and is used to group the pupils into sets for English and mathematics. This includes the identification of very able pupils, who usually have work well matched to their needs. Some teachers have used assessment information to set individual or group improvement targets and these are shared with the pupils. In the best examples, targets are put into the pupils' books and highlighted when a target has been met. Pupils know what they are going to learn next and have a clear idea how they can improve their work. However, this is not consistent across the school and not all targets are clearly visible or available for pupils to refer to.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

41. Parents mostly express positive views about the school. They are particularly pleased with the high standards and feel that the school is very approachable. Overall, the school has maintained good relationships with parents since the previous inspection. However, several parents are concerned about the amount of homework set and a smaller minority about the information they receive about how their child is getting on. The inspection findings support parents' concerns regarding homework. Information provided to parents about their child's progress is judged to be satisfactory overall although there are variations in the quality of pupils' end of year reports.

42. Parents are kept well informed about what is happening in school. There are regular newsletters and letters home about specific events. These are also posted on the school's

web-site. Each year-group provides termly information about the topics to be covered in various subjects, so that parents can support their children's learning at home. This is good practice. The school produced an excellent book about its life and work to celebrate the Millennium.

43. Pupils' end of year reports are satisfactory overall, although the quality varies. The best examples give detailed information about what the child can do, covering the different areas of the core subjects, English, mathematics and science, as well as giving a clear picture of what has been achieved in the foundation subjects. Others are brief and merely say what has been covered without telling the parent enough about how well their child has succeeded. Good features of reports are the test results which show how the pupil compares with others of a similar age, and the section on personal development. These show that teachers know their pupils well. Targets set for the following year are also variable, some being very broad, for example 'Continue to learn spellings', while the more useful ones are very specific, such as 'learn 2, 3, 4, 5 times tables during the holidays'. There are appropriate termly opportunities to meet the class teacher, so that parents can discuss their child's progress in detail.

44. Parents are invited to the annual review for those pupils with statements of special educational needs. Targets set in individual education plans are shared with parents. However, they do not receive a copy of their child's plan for reference when supporting them at home. The Learning Support manager works closely with parents of pupils with English as an additional language. She ensures that they are welcomed and involved in the support their children receive.

45. Some parents feel that not enough homework is set and that it is not given regularly and consistently. Inspectors agree that there is inconsistency in the amount set and some teachers do not abide by the agreed timetable or school policy. A few parents felt that their children should not have any homework. Discussions with pupils during the inspection revealed that, whilst several parents hear their children read regularly at home, a significant minority do not. Home/school reading records reflect this variation in response and also show that some teachers respond regularly to parental comments written in the books, whereas others rarely do so.

46. Overall, parents' involvement in the school is satisfactory. Many parents support the school well, taking pupils to sporting or musical events and attending events organised by the parents, teachers and friends association (UPTFA). These raise considerable sums of money which directly benefits pupils. However, only a few parents are prepared or able to take an active role in school, for example by helping in the classroom or volunteering to join the UPTFA committee.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

47. The headteacher provides good leadership and is well supported by the deputy headteacher and the staff. This contributes to the positive ethos and wide range of opportunities for pupils. Relationships between members of the school community are very positive, and pupils respond well to the commitment of staff. The school's aims and values are met in its work and this is reflected in the confidence that parents have in the school.

48. Overall management is satisfactory. Given the size of the school there is appropriate delegation of both pastoral and curricular management responsibilities. There are strengths in the role of subject managers who monitor lessons each term as part of the school's strategic improvement plan. For example, observations of English and mathematics

lessons have led to a good list of recommendations, and a very detailed analysis of test results has identified areas for improvement. However, the action taken following evaluation has yet to ensure that teaching is consistently good in all classes. The school is aware of the weakness in this aspect of its management and has appointed a senior teacher responsible for managing the curriculum and evaluating its effectiveness. This is a developing role and has not had time to have a major impact.

49. The governors meet their statutory responsibilities. They know the school well and are very supportive to the headteacher and staff. The chair of governors is in regular contact with the school. Governors are kept well informed through their own focused visits each term and regular reports they receive from school staff. Governors have a well-placed trust in the headteacher for the day-to-day running of the school, and are effective in shaping its direction. They have applied their efforts and expertise to major issues such as staffing and strategic financial matters.

50. The development of systematic monitoring procedures has been an improvement since the last inspection. The school has satisfactory arrangements for monitoring and evaluating its performance. There is careful analysis of results. The headteacher carries out specific evaluations, such as the review of science teaching, and has a good knowledge of what is happening through feedback from subject leaders. The school development plan, although concise and including costs and time-scales, does not yet have the consistently clear success criteria suggested at the last inspection.

51. The provision for special educational needs is effectively managed. Provision is monitored carefully and there is a good plan for future development. Staff receive appropriate training and are given support in writing individual education plans. The school is "piloting" a special Local Education Authority initiative for funding special educational needs. It uses this money well and has adopted a flexible approach on how it is spent to meet the needs of pupils. The governors give a high priority to special needs provision and have allocated extra money from the budget. Consequently, it is well staffed and resourced.

52. Financial management is sound overall and educational priorities dictate financial decisions. The school satisfactorily applies the principles of best value, for example in comparing performance with others, questioning annual priorities and costs, seeking quotations for major expenditure and consulting relevant people about school decisions. The school has taken steps to ensure all financial procedures meet the requirements. Good use is made of new technology, such as an electronic diary and using e-mail for staff communication. A business manager organises the many lettings and manages a variety of projects well, raising significant funds for the school and enabling teaching staff to focus on their main tasks. School administration is unobtrusive and makes a good contribution to the smooth running of the school.

53. Resources are used effectively to benefit the pupils and to ensure good value for money. Overall the school has satisfactory resources for learning. The school recognises that the number of books in the library is below that recommended and has appropriate plans to improve both stock and accommodation. Resources for information and communication technology are very good, both in the number and quality of computers and other specialised equipment, such as an electronic white-board and projector.

54. The number, qualifications and experience of the teachers are well matched to the requirements for teaching the curriculum. A low turnover of staff means that the school has retained many long-serving and experienced teachers. A good number of effective learning

support assistants and other key staff includes those with swimming qualifications and expertise in information technology. There are good arrangements for training learning support assistants. Appropriate systems are in place for the performance management of teaching staff. Plans for the induction of new staff and in-service training are being developed to ensure these fully match the school's future needs. The school currently makes good provision for teachers on initial teacher training.

55. The accommodation overall is adequate, although the majority of classrooms are cramped for the large classes that occupy them much of the time. One year group out of the four occupies a recently-built and attractive block. Throughout the building, lively displays value the pupils' work and illustrate most areas of the curriculum, especially the high standards in art. The school hall is used for dining, assemblies and physical education where it has its limitations. When all classes are in the hall there is very little room for parents or visitors to attend special occasions such as assemblies. The school library shares a large room with the computer suite as it is the only spare room suitable for this purpose. The area is too small for a school of this size and does not allow much space for increasing the stock of books nor for displays which could generate interest amongst pupils. The school has plans to expand the building and provide a better library. The school benefits from an excellent swimming pool and large playing field. These considerably enhance sporting opportunities for pupils and provide valuable links with the community.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

56. The school should now:

- A. Achieve consistency in aspects of teaching so that lessons are always of a high quality by:
- improving lesson planning so that the aims of the lesson and the use of teaching time are always clearly identified;
 - teachers, especially those in the same year group, planning lessons together more closely so that expertise is shared and the most effective teaching methods are used in each class;
 - improving the quality of marking so that pupils understand what they have done well and where they can improve;
 - all teachers keeping similar ongoing records, especially in reading, which are helpful in day-to-day planning, without being onerous to complete;
 - all teachers setting homework in line with the school's policy, monitoring homework diaries and home reading records to ensure that parents' comments are always responded to. Making sure that pupils' homework is always valued and pupils given feedback on how well they have done;
 - ensuring that all the above issues are carefully monitored and action taken to rectify any inconsistencies.

(see paragraphs 15-23, 26, 40, 45, 48, 61, 62, 67, 68, 70, 71, 74, 79, 82 85, 89, 93, 101-103)

B. Improve progress in science by:

- implementing improved planning to ensure there is better progress in the development of knowledge and skills;
- monitoring work to ensure that the new planning is effective in raising standards.

(see paragraphs 5, 26, 72-76)

The school should consider the following smaller issues for inclusion in its action plan:

- Widen pupils' experience of using and applying mathematics. (see paragraphs 65, 66)
- Continue to improve library provision as already planned by the school. (see paragraphs 53, 63)
- Review the use of silent reading sessions to ensure that the time is used well for learning. (see paragraph 59)
- Improve ways of measuring the success of targets on the school development plan. (see paragraph 50)
- Check that action taken when children feel they have been bullied is always persistently followed through to ensure that all pupils remain happy with the outcomes. (see paragraph 37)
- Ensure pupils' reports are of a consistently good quality and that they contain targets which are helpful to pupils and parents. (see paragraph 43).

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed

79

Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils

32

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactor y	Unsatisfactor y	Poor	Very Poor
4	23	39	30	3	1	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	Y3 – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	512
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	57
Special educational needs	Y3 – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	17
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	191
English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	26
Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils

Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	13
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	8

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.6
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.1
National comparative data	0.5

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 2

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	2000	81	78	159

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	61	61	68
	Girls	69	63	70
	Total	130	124	138
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	82 (69)	78 (63)	87 (70)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	52	54	59
	Girls	61	62	61
	Total	113	1116	120
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	73 (75)	75 (80)	76 (78)
	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	3
Indian	3
Pakistani	1
Bangladeshi	1
Chinese	0
White	498
Any other minority ethnic group	5

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: Y3 – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	21.2
--	------

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.

Financial information

Financial year	2000/2001
----------------	-----------

Number of pupils per qualified teacher	24.2
Average class size	32

Education support staff: Y3 – Y6

Total number of education support staff	20
Total aggregate hours worked per week	326

FTE means full-time equivalent.

	£
Total income	976611
Total expenditure	959886
Expenditure per pupil	1875
Balance brought forward from previous year	20623
Balance carried forward to next year	37348

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	510
Number of questionnaires returned	169

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	49	44	5	1	1
My child is making good progress in school.	45	47	6	2	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	34	52	10	1	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	24	46	19	10	1
The teaching is good.	49	44	4	1	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	40	42	15	3	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	63	29	7	1	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	60	36	1	1	2
The school works closely with parents.	33	51	11	4	1
The school is well led and managed.	45	48	4	2	1
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	43	48	5	1	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	60	34	4	1	1

Other issues raised by parents

Apart from individual issues, the following points were raised:

The good provision and high standards of sport and music.

A few parents are not happy with the way the school deals with misbehaviour and social problems between pupils.

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

ENGLISH

57. Results of the 2000 national tests for eleven year-olds are in line with the national average and those for similar schools. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language, achieve well in relation to the targets set for them because of the overall good standard of teaching. Since the last report results in national tests have improved in line with the national picture.

58. Standards of speaking and listening are high throughout the school and, by the time they leave, pupils' attainment is above national expectations. Pupils listen well to each other and to teachers and this helps them to make progress in all subjects. Pupils develop speaking and listening skills well through discussion. They speak confidently to adults and in front of classes. In ICT, for example, pupils discuss their work in pairs before making a decision and, when required, they confidently present their work to the rest of the class. Pupils have a well-developed sense of drama; the more adventurous have a go at speaking in accents or with dramatic expression. Many pupils have a good vocabulary and are learning to express themselves in different ways. For example, Year 5 pupils, taking the parts of characters discussing a traffic proposal, conducted a lesson in the style of a public meeting. One pupil reacted to a point by saying, "Mr. Baker's points are rather selfish. It is all I, I, I." Additional opportunities for pupils to speak and listen include circle time, assemblies and meetings of the School Council.

59. Overall, standards in reading are in line with the national average. Some pupils, mostly girls, have significant reading skills that enable them to access a wide range of literature and to read with flair and expression. They discuss the content at a high level. For example, a Year 6 pupil talked about the relative merits of stories intended for boy or girl audiences. By the age of eleven, higher attaining pupils read expressively, can share their personal views on a text and know where to look for supporting evidence. Pupils have good attitudes to reading. The majority enjoy reading although a sizeable minority read only occasionally at home. The school has correctly identified that boys lag behind girls in their reading skills and is taking steps to address this gap. The silent reading sessions are not as effective in promoting good patterns of reading as the group reading sessions. Their unstructured nature means that, in some classes, pupils are not always using the time well.

60. By the end of Year 6, standards in writing are in line with national expectations, with some higher attaining pupils producing work of particular maturity and sensitivity. Most pupils express themselves clearly in writing with sound punctuation and spelling. The higher attainers offer opinions that are mature, thoughtful and founded in a good understanding of the features of writing. Many pupils produce written work of significant length and quality, varying from stories of more than 300 words in Year 3, to works exceeding 650 words in Year 6. In all years, pupils write for a variety of audiences and in a number of different styles. Among the most effective seen were the pieces written in dialect by Year 3 pupils after studying two contrasting characters in Lynne Reid Banks' "The Indian in the Cupboard". There is good factual writing in history and religious education, such as the work about Henry VIII in Year 4, or in Year 6 views on the moralities of being rich.

61. The overall quality of teaching observed was good. The quality of lessons ranged from excellent to unsatisfactory, with the majority being good or very good. This is an improvement since the last inspection when a fifth of lessons was unsatisfactory. Teachers are skilled at questioning and their generally good subject knowledge, combined with high

expectations, helps pupils to make good progress. Although the school has implemented the Literacy Strategy successfully, variations in lesson planning meant that the focus of some lessons was not sufficiently precise and time not used to the best advantage. For example, the most effective use of texts occurred when teachers made their selection from a broad range of sources. In others there was an over reliance on textbooks which only gave examples of texts and did not always give a wider picture of the book or type of writing being studied. Timetable arrangements mean that some lessons are over an hour. However, where use of this time is well planned with a variety of activities, as in an outstanding Year 5 lesson, the pace of learning was rapid. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 are arranged in ability groups for literacy. This is effective because teachers can plan the introduction of specific skills more closely matched to the ability range. Learning support assistants work closely with teachers and help pupils with special educational needs to make good progress.

62. Strategies for assessing pupils' progress are satisfactory overall and include a number of reading assessments. The information is used well, for example, to match pupils to teaching sets. However, there are too many variations in the ongoing reading records kept by teachers. The best records are diagnostic and help the teacher plan support for pupils. The least effective merely show the frequency with which children are heard to read. A common marking system has been devised but has yet to be fully implemented. Consequently, there are inconsistencies in the quality of marking. The best is positive and shows how improvements might be made; the weakest is minimal with a tick and a comment that may be irrelevant, for example, "neat work".

63. English is effectively led. Weekly non-teaching time has been used well to carry out detailed analyses of data and lesson observation. This has been used to improve subject planning and to start addressing some of the issues regarding consistency identified by the subject manager and confirmed in this report. The school library is used satisfactorily to support work in English but, as the school recognises, the number of books in the library is below that recommended and appropriate plans are in place to improve the stock.

MATHEMATICS

64. Pupils generally achieve well in mathematics. Attainment overall is above that expected because pupils have developed good number skills. The results of the 2000 tests for eleven year-olds were above the national averages when compared with all and similar schools. An above-average proportion of pupils reached the higher level 5, showing the good achievement by higher-attaining pupils and the benefits of setting in mathematics. Overall, since the last inspection, improvement has been satisfactory, with test results being above the national average in most years. Pupils with special educational needs make sound progress, and there has been little significant difference in the performance of girls and boys.

65. The school has maintained pupils' strengths in number work and mental arithmetic, reported at the last inspection. By the age of eleven, most pupils have quick and accurate recall of multiplication tables, and use effective strategies for mental calculations. Higher-attaining pupils work confidently with large numbers, and also have a good understanding of fractions, decimals and percentages. Lower-attaining pupils work competently with simpler numbers, for example in a lower Year 4 set pupils successfully multiplied two-digit by one-digit numbers. Pupils are less strong at using their calculation skills to solve real-life problems. This is not given enough emphasis, as indicated by pages of repetitive written calculations in some pupils' books.

66. Standards in shape work, handling data and applying mathematics are broadly average. Pupils' written work shows that these aspects are either under-represented or covered inconsistently between teachers. However, in an excellent Year 5 lesson, the pupils learnt about regular polyhedra (solid figures with many faces) and explored their interesting properties. By the age of eleven, pupils collect and display data in pie charts and bar charts, and use computers in handling data. Although they learn how to calculate the mode, mean and median, and study basic probability, the quality of statistical work does not match that in number. The school has recognised the need to improve the standards in using and applying mathematics across all aspects of the subject and is giving priority to improving pupils' problem-solving skills.

67. Overall the quality of teaching and learning seen was good. Roughly half the teaching was judged good and very good, and nearly half was satisfactory. There was a small amount of unsatisfactory teaching. The better lessons incorporated a variety of activities and good use of time and practical apparatus which enabled pupils to think for themselves. A well-paced Year 6 lesson included an angles game for pairs of pupils as well as individual and whole-class work. A good feature to most lessons was the attention given to correct mathematical vocabulary, often displayed in the classroom. Most teachers are familiar with the National Numeracy Strategy and use the three-part lesson structure. Where the mental and oral session was used well, all pupils were actively involved, for example by using prepared number cards. In a very good Year 4 lesson, pupils started by chanting number patterns both forwards and backwards, then used clock faces to practise skills with time. Less effective starter sessions were too short, involved few of the pupils and did not develop pupils' mental agility. The value of the plenary session (the final part of a lesson) varied; at its best it was used well to recap or evaluate pupils' learning.

68. In lessons where teaching and learning were less effective, pupils were not always involved in discussion or practical work. Learning was also weaker where pupils did not apply ideas. For example, in a Year 6 lesson, pupils could accurately describe and recognise acute, obtuse or reflex angles, but were not encouraged to apply their knowledge when choosing between protractor readings such as 70 and 110 degrees. Many mathematics lessons are currently longer than the recommended time. However, pupils mostly behave well and try hard to concentrate on their work.

69. Pupils use their numeracy skills satisfactorily in other subjects. In geography, for example, pupils interpreted graphs about climate and, in a physical education lesson, they measured distances, used stop-watches and had to tabulate results. The use of computers in mathematics is developing well, for example in data-handling and a popular individualised learning program.

70. Assessment has improved since the last inspection, with regular tests and very detailed analyses of the national tests taken each year. The marking of pupils' work varies in quality. Many teachers make only general comments with few helpful suggestions for improvement.

71. Since the last inspection strategies for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning have improved. The subject leader now carries out classroom observations each term and makes recommendations to raise the overall quality of teaching. These are especially helpful as she is an excellent role model for colleagues through her knowledge and expertise of teaching mathematics. However, there is still much to achieve in ensuring consistently good teaching across all classes.

SCIENCE

72. In the 2000 national tests, pupils' results were below those expected nationally and those of similar schools. Results over the last few years have fluctuated. They were well below average in 1997, improved to average in 1998 but have remained below average for the past two years. The overall performance in 2000 is due to the below average number of pupils who attain higher levels in science. The proportion achieving national standards was average. All aspects of science are taught with a good emphasis on investigations and experiments. This latter aspect is a good improvement since the last inspection when it was identified as a weakness.

73. Pupils learn about the human body, aspects of healthy eating, plant life and the similarities in all living things. By Year 4 they are becoming confident when using "decision trees" to classify life forms. Pupils learn about a variety of materials and by Year 6 are beginning to understand about how to sort materials and separate mixtures by various means. Pupils gain a satisfactory knowledge of electricity and sound. Although in most of the work seen pupils' standards are broadly in line with those expected, progress between year groups is uneven because of weaknesses in curriculum planning which leads to some work being repeated. This especially restricts the achievement of the most able pupils who do not study the repeated aspects at a new challenging level, and is a significant factor in the depressed test results. For example, as they get older, pupils repeat work on teeth, healthy eating and electricity without enough differences in content. A good feature of pupils' achievements is their ability to think scientifically. They make initial predictions and test these using scientific methods. Most pupils record their findings accurately and give reasonable explanations for their results.

74. The teaching of science observed was satisfactory overall although the quality varied from class to class. In Years 3 and 5, for example, teaching was good. Teachers in the better lessons had secure subject knowledge and provided interesting activities to encourage pupils to research and record their findings. Teachers expected the pupils to produce a sufficient amount of work, both individually and when working in groups. Good use was made of available resources and teachers ensured that all pupils understood their tasks and made good learning gains. In other classes, there was occasionally too low an expectation and pupils did not make appropriate gains in their knowledge. Planning was inadequate and it was not clear what the pupils were to learn. Marking is inconsistent amongst teachers and does not always provide guidance to pupils on what they are doing well and how they can improve.

75. Pupils were usually interested in their work. In the best lessons, they worked hard and collaborated well. For example, in Year 5, pupils discussed their work in pairs and this helped them generate ideas about how sounds are changed and made. In weaker lessons, pupils became restless when too much time was spent explaining tasks.

76. The subject manager is relatively new to the post but has worked hard to improve provision in the subject. He has identified weaknesses within the curriculum and is taking effective steps to address these by revising the scheme of work. However, these have yet to be implemented to have an impact on the standards achieved by pupils. The environmental garden is an asset as pupils use this to learn more about natural science and to study a variety of animal life in natural habitats.

ART AND DESIGN

77. A wide range of pupils' completed work was seen in art and design. From this it is evident that pupils' attainment is above national expectations by the end of Year 6 with

some work of a very high quality. Standards have improved since the last inspection. Weaknesses in three-dimensional art and the subject's contribution to cultural development have been rectified.

78. The display of art around the school is stimulating and shows the value placed on pupils' work. A wide variety of techniques and media are used ranging from clay and textile to paint, pastels and chalk. Examples include: intricate weaving patterns and carefully designed illuminated letters in Year 3; very expressive painted clay representations of King Henry V1111's face and well proportioned three dimensional pastel drawings in Year 4; carefully observed water-colour pictures in Year 5 based on Van Gogh; and mosaics and imaginative work in Year 6 based on other artists such as Mondrian, Matisse and Hockney. Older pupils' work on street scenes show a good understanding of perspective. Some particularly effective charcoal and pastel sketches of trees, displayed in Year 6, show how pupils skilfully blend and use colour or shades. Pupils use ICT as part of their work in art, for example by creating symmetrical patterns, drawing illustrations for other subjects and for designing posters. All pupils have sketchbooks which are used well to help them plan their work. These are also helpful in showing the good achievement of pupils in developing their skills from year to year. In a lesson seen during the inspection, pupils were introduced to interesting, new techniques based on the abstract art of Jasper Johns.

79. The subject is well managed, with an action plan based on the monitoring of teaching and observation of pupils' work. The recording of pupils' progress has been identified as an area for improvement to ensure consistency amongst teachers. A helpful scheme of work has useful suggestions to aid the teaching of art skills.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

80. No lessons took place during the inspection week and there was not enough work available to make a secure judgement about standards. However, photographs and samples of designs and models retained by the school, indicate that work is being taught at an appropriate level for the pupils' ages.

81. The degree of complexity in both designing and making increases as pupils get older. Younger pupils make dragon-heads with jaw movements controlled by simple pneumatics. They design and make land yachts and test them for performance. A grid with ticks under headings, such as shape and ease of carrying, is used by pupils to evaluate each other's purse designs. Older pupils consider the function of footwear and design slippers to meet certain requirements, for example hygiene, warmth and safety. They write evaluations of their work, including how improvements could be made. Useful links with mathematics are made when measuring and estimating the components of models. The importance of triangles and pillars in structures is discussed when pupils look at different types of shelters in the area. This knowledge is applied creatively when pupils design and make models of shelters for the school field.

82. The subject has been well led to rectify weaknesses in teachers' understanding, evident in the last inspection. Termly, whole school design and technology days have been introduced for which teachers plan together in year groups and share their expertise. The lack of storage space has been overcome as all classrooms are totally focused on the work during the designated days, and tasks are completed within a short time. The subject manager has used the design and technology days very well to evaluate the success of projects and make written recommendations for improvements. The lack of an agreed system for recording pupils' progress restricts teachers' ability to plan for different levels of attainment within classes. ICT is not used enough to support designing and making.

GEOGRAPHY

83. Evidence from past work and from the few lessons seen, indicates that by the age of 11, pupils attain standards in geography that are broadly in line with those expected for their age. They identify the countries that make up the United Kingdom together with the principal cities and the areas of mountain and lowland. Pupils compare features of other countries with those of the United Kingdom, consider the location of settlements and identify differences in the landscapes. In a Year 4 lesson, pupils considered the reasons for choices of activities during holidays, for example cost, interest and climate. Year 6 pupils identified the causes of coastal erosion in the Broadstairs area. They develop appropriate skills for reading and drawing maps and interpret the symbols used on them. There has been satisfactory improvement in the subject since the last inspection.

84. Too few lessons were observed during the inspection to reach a judgement about the quality of teaching in geography. However, an examination of the work produced by pupils shows that the subject is systematically taught following an appropriate scheme of work. Teachers expect pupils to complete and present their work neatly

85. The subject is well managed. Monitoring has been used well to identify strengths and take action on areas for development, for example marking, which is used by some teachers to assess pupils' work thoroughly but is far less thorough in other cases. Lesson planning varies between classes in the same year group and this contributes to some differences in the standard of work though not in the content of the curriculum. The use of ICT is improving and includes research on the Internet and the use of multi-media equipment to present information.

HISTORY

86. As in the last inspection, history is something that the school does well. Evidence from past work and in the very few lessons observed, indicates that pupils' standards are those expected for their ages with a strong sense of historical "enquiry" (how to find out about the past and to ask and answer questions). For example, pupils pose "What if?" questions, such as "What if Thanet was invaded during the Second World War?" More able pupils know what are meant by primary and secondary sources and how to use them. Pupils have a good sense of chronology (the order in which historical events occur) and name the key features of the period they are studying. They enjoy history and understand its importance. This is reflected in the care taken by pupils in the presentation of their work, including some very good art.

87. History makes a positive contribution to the teaching of English, particularly through the re-telling of historical stories, diaries and factual accounts. For example, in the Year 6 work on Ancient Egypt, pupils' writing was thoughtful and reflective. Some Year 4 work included good investigative writing about Greek gods.

88. The history theme days make a worthwhile contribution to the subject and to pupils' cultural development. A very good Tudor day for Year 4 pupils took place during the inspection and focused on games of the time. Good use is made of the many historical features of the local community, for example, how buildings and land use have changed over time, and the involvement of Dickens in Broadstairs.

89. The subject is managed enthusiastically and monitored carefully to ensure that teachers are following the school's scheme of work. However, teachers' marking is not consistently helpful in identifying where pupils do well and how they can improve.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

90. Pupils' attainment by the end of Year 6 is broadly similar to that expected nationally. The rate of pupils' learning has improved since the last inspection due to the successful use of a very well-equipped computer suite, and the valuable support provided to teachers by a knowledgeable ICT teaching assistant.

91. Pupils use information from Internet websites, such as one about the local environment, to help them prepare computerised slide shows. In one Year 5 lesson, a group used a large computer screen to present the "story of a river" to the class. They had successfully applied a range of skills, including the selection of appropriate print styles, layout and backgrounds, the transferring of pictures from a library stored on the computer and a variety of interesting techniques for moving text and illustrations on to the screen. Pupils learn how to use E-mails and video conferencing when contacting a school in France. Pupils make good use of ICT to support their work in English. A lower set of Year 6 pupils inserted punctuation which had been removed from the text they were studying in literacy lessons. In a Year 5 lesson, pupils combined the effective use of words with layout and style to produce a poster persuading people to attend a meeting about traffic problems. Pupils develop their numeracy skills well when using a teaching programme which enables them to work at their own level. As they get older, pupils become increasingly proficient in the use of LOGO (an application on the computer where pupils draw using a series of commands involving distance and angle) to write formulae for constructing geometric shapes. Younger pupils select and print out graphs from information and, by the end of Year 6, many pupils use spreadsheets, for example to convert fractions into percentages. However, they have a limited understanding of databases and their uses.

92. The quality of teaching and learning observed during the inspection was consistently good and occasionally very good. Teachers gave clear instructions by effectively using a large display board connected to a computer. This very useful piece of equipment enabled teachers to touch the various commands and symbols on the screen whilst facing and talking to their classes. Teachers provide effective support when pupils are working in groups, stopping them at appropriate moments to teach skills. For example, they reminded pupils of the importance of regularly saving their work or suggested they check "print preview" before agreeing on a final layout. The contribution of the teaching assistant was particularly significant in the quality of pupils' learning and was very helpful in the development of teachers' skills and confidence. She provided very good support to teachers during lessons by using her expertise to help pupils, solve technical problems and, on occasions, introduce tasks. Activities are usually purposefully related to other subjects and this contributes to the high levels of interest and concentration shown by pupils. Pupils with special educational needs have an additional computer which is used regularly for specialised work. In addition, classroom assistants worked well with these pupils during class lessons and ensured that their rate of learning was good.

93. The subject is well led. Clear targets for pupils' achievement, based on national guidance, have been set for each year group and these are monitored each term to ensure that each class is working towards them. An action plan identifies priorities for the subject over the next few years. These correctly include improved use of pupils' assessment to help plan work and the continued training of all staff. Up-to-date equipment, including seventeen multi-media machines in the computer suite, a further computer in each

classroom and other facilities such as a digital camera, ensures a broad range of learning opportunities. The school aims to increase the number of computers in line with the government's aims for 2002. However, a lack of space makes it very difficult for more than one computer to be placed in each classroom or to extend the computer suite which is shared with the school library.

MUSIC

94. Pupils attain standards in music that are well above those expected for their ages. The knowledge of a music specialist is used very effectively to ensure that all pupils have access to high quality music teaching and that all make very good learning gains. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection when standards were judged to be only in line with expectations.

95. During their time in school, pupils learn to compose using both tuned and untuned percussion instruments. They work in pairs and small groups to produce work based on a variety of stimuli. For example, Year 4 pupils composed quite complicated pieces of music inspired by a picture. They explored pitch and tempo and used these effectively to convey the mood of the picture. In Year 3, pupils composed music that demonstrated how contrasting animals, for example, a mouse and an elephant, could be portrayed musically. The quality of singing throughout the school is very high. This was evident in assemblies and in the Year 6 rehearsal for a forthcoming production of "Joseph".

96. There are many musical clubs and extra-curricular activities which support music very successfully. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 have the opportunity to join a singing club. The choir for Years 5 and 6 is very well attended and pupils learn to sing in three part harmonies with great competence. The choir performs in many concerts locally and has twice travelled abroad to sing in schools and churches. The many instrumental lessons have a positive impact on the quality of music and pupils perform enthusiastically during assemblies.

97. Pupils are very interested in music and are keen to learn. They are willing to experiment with sound and to share their work with the rest of the class. When composing, the pupils work in mixed gender groupings and produce some very thoughtful work. They discuss their work and how it could be improved.

98. The musical specialist teaches all classes, which is a very effective use of her expertise. During the inspection, a class from each year group was observed for a music lesson and the quality of teaching was very good. The teacher's very high expectations helped all pupils to achieve very well in the tasks set.

99. Music is enthusiastically managed to ensure that all pupils have high quality provision and that there is a wide range of opportunities, including for those pupils with particular talents. The good quality resources are used well to support learning.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

100. Lessons were observed in games and swimming only, but several extra-curricular sporting activities were also seen. In games and swimming, the two aspects observed during the inspection, pupils attain standards higher than those expected by the end of Year 6. The good standards reported at the last inspection have been maintained. Pupils enjoy physical education and co-operate well in all activities. They build up skills and learn the rules of games. Both boys and girls perform well. Pupils in all years have swimming lessons, gain considerable confidence in the water and become skilled in the range of strokes.

101. Pupils know they need to warm up prior to exercise, although the quality of this activity and the pupils' understanding of its purpose vary, depending on the expertise of their teacher. Working in pairs, pupils in both Years 5 and 6 showed reasonable accuracy in throwing and catching, and in other cricket skills such as fielding techniques. The Year 5 pupils collaborated well in small groups to play cricket games fairly and competitively. The response of a Year 4 class was very good when they had to organise themselves in small groups to measure and record their performances at different athletic activities such as shuttle runs and standing jumps. This made a good contribution to developing numeracy skills.

102. Not enough lessons were observed to make an overall judgement about the quality of teaching. In the lessons seen it ranged from satisfactory to very good. In the best lessons, specific techniques were taught and clear instructions given. Pupils happily demonstrated their skills to the rest of the class, but were not always expected to evaluate each other's performance in order to help them improve. Lessons were generally taught at a good pace. This was particularly evident in swimming lessons where pupils worked hard throughout each session. In the swimming pool, the staff gave very good emphasis to safety and the pupils responded sensibly. High quality teaching in a Year 5 cricket lesson progressively built up fielding skills and led to successful small-sided games.

103. Teachers' preparation is supported by brief medium-term plans. However, these rely too much on teachers planning the detailed content and teaching methods for lessons. The school has an excellent swimming pool and large playing field, although the hall has limitations for indoor activity.

104. A major strength of the school is the range and quality of extra-curricular sport, especially team games. Many pupils have their talents nurtured in sports and achieve considerable success at both local and county level, for example in football, rugby, netball and athletics. This can be attributed to the hard work of the children and many adults, especially the enthusiastic subject leader, and does much to enhance the opportunities for pupils and the local recognition for the school.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

105. By the age of 11, pupils attain standards that are in line with those specified in the locally agreed syllabus. This syllabus has recently been revised and the school has ensured that standards have been maintained during this time of change. There has been satisfactory improvement since the last inspection.

106. Pupils learn about the major religions of the world and discuss these confidently as they get older. For example, younger pupils know about Guru Nanak and his life. By the end of Year 6, they discuss whether or not being rich would make you a better person, with points of view based on the teachings of the Guru and their own experiences of life. Pupils learn about Christianity and understand the significance of the Easter and Christmas stories. In Year 4, pupils know stories from the Old Testament and begin to understand about special books through learning about the Ten Commandments and the Ark of the Covenant. They make their own special book and construct an appropriate container to keep it safe. These activities are linked to Jewish festivals, which help pupils learn about some of the similarities between faiths. Pupils develop a sound understanding of different religions, including Sikhism and Buddhism. They discuss the reasons for the various celebrations and compare them with those in their own lives.

107. Few religious education lessons were seen during the inspection so much of the evidence has been gained through looking at books and talking to pupils. However, in those lessons observed, teachers had good subject knowledge and demonstrated a sensitive approach when talking about, or handling, objects of religious significance from different faiths. This helped pupils to develop respect for and understanding of the beliefs of other people. Teachers gained the interest of pupils by providing stimulating activities. For example, in connection with their work on Jewish customs, pupils made their own rules on scrolls and others produced a computer slide-show on the same theme. Pupils felt confident in expressing their own points during discussions, knowing that the rest of the class would listen to them maturely. Literacy skills are developed in several written activities. This was evident in a Year 6 lesson when pupils wrote at length and with feeling about whether you can be rich and good. Displays in rooms often reflect the content of religious education lessons and help to give the subject a high profile within the school.

108. The subject is supported through well-planned assemblies. Many visitors to the school help the pupils understand about the relevance of religious thinking today. For example, a very good assembly, led by a local minister, helped the pupils to understand about dealing with some of the problems of life. It was lively and captivated pupils' interest.

109. The subject benefits from enthusiastic and knowledgeable leadership. The recent review of the curriculum has been well managed with clear guidance given to help teachers when planning lessons. Much emphasis is given to pupils' spiritual development and many of the lessons contained time for reflection.