

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **DANSON PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Welling, Kent

LEA area: Bexley

Unique reference number: 101404

Headteacher: Mrs I Cass

Reporting inspector: Mr R E King  
1742

Dates of inspection: 20<sup>th</sup> to 24<sup>th</sup> March 2000

Inspection number: 191682

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Danson Lane Welling Kent
Postcode:	DA16 2BH
Telephone number:	020 8303 1858
Fax number:	020 8304 2075
Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr G Bisson
Date of previous inspection:	27 <sup>th</sup> – 31 <sup>st</sup> January 1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Mr R King	Registered inspector	Mathematics	Characteristics of the school Results and achievements Leadership and management
Ms M Davie	Lay inspector	Equal opportunities	Attitudes, values and personal development Partnership with parents
Ms G Carter	Team inspector	Special educational needs English History	
Ms K Fleming	Team inspector	Art Music Physical education	Curriculum
Ms S Airey	Team inspector	Religious education English as an additional language	Teaching
Ms D Cinamon	Team inspector	Provision for the under fives Geography	
Ms S Teacher	Team inspector	Science Information technology Design and technology	Pupil care and monitoring

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Danson Primary School is a community school with a nursery attached. It provides education for boys and girls from four to eleven years of age. There are 458 pupils in the main school and 53 part-time nursery children, making the school much bigger than average. There is about the same number of boys as girls. As children start school, their attainments are broadly average. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is similar to the national picture. Sixty-seven pupils are being given support because they have special educational needs and this is slightly lower than the national proportion. Three pupils receive support from outside the school, either for their special needs or because they have English as an additional language.

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

This is a good and improving school in which standards overall are in line with the national average. When they leave the school, pupils' attainments are above the national average in English, broadly in line with the average in mathematics and below this in science. The quality of teaching is good and is a key factor in improving standards.

The headteacher provides very good leadership and works within a strong partnership with the governors. There is a very strong common desire to make further improvements and the school is making progress towards its aims to enable pupils to fulfil their potential and to become more self-aware. The school provides good value for money.

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

- The headteacher provides very strong leadership and gives very clear educational direction for the work and development of the school.
- There is a very strong, shared commitment and capacity to improve within the senior management team and throughout the school.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good throughout the school.
- The management of pupils is very good.
- Provision for pupils' personal development is excellent.
- The respect that pupils hold for each other is very good and relationships are excellent.
- Pupils have very high levels of interest, are independent and their attitudes and behaviour are very good.
- Key Stage 2 pupils have very good understanding of how well they are doing and where they can make progress.

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

- There are inconsistencies in the ways in which the upper and lower schools are led and in the roles of the senior teachers.
- The use of assessment and systems for setting, linking and monitoring progress of targets for individual pupils with those for the school.
- Assessments systems in science, information technology and religious education are unsatisfactory.
- Some aspects of provision for pupils in Key Stage 2 with special educational needs are unsatisfactory.
- Progress towards the planned improvements in information technology is too slow.

*These 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 it has made good progress on the vast majority of issues since that time. In particular, the overall quality of teaching has improved so that teaching is now good overall. Attainments in English and mathematics are being raised. Improvement has been made in the standards of music and teachers' expertise has also been improved in this subject. There are clear improvements in school management and subject leaders are becoming more effective. There is a strong system of monitoring and development of teaching in place. By the end of both key stages attainment in information communication technology is broadly in line with expectations; however, further developments need to take place in its use across the curriculum.

## STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1997	1998	1999	1999
English	A	C	B	B
mathematics	C	C	C	C
science	E	C	D	E

Key	
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E

Although results in English are not as high as they were in 1997, they have shown sustained overall improvement since 1998. Work seen in English during the inspection indicates that pupils are articulate, fluent speakers, they organise their writing well and use appropriate vocabulary and their attainments are generally above the national average. Mathematics results and the pupils' work seen during the inspection indicates that standards in Key Stage 1 are better than the national average. In Key Stage 2, they are close to the national average, but recent developments in the teaching of numeracy are raising standards. The school is working to improve standards in science. Work observed during the inspection indicates that pupils are working at levels which are now in line with national averages.

The school has set challenging targets for improvement and is taking action to maintain and improve standards. Direct action to improve teaching and learning in the core subjects and religious education is resulting in improvements in pupils' work.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils' attitudes to the school are very good and they are enthusiastic about learning.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour in lessons and around the school is very good with a significant positive impact on pupils' learning.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils work together well and help each other. Relationships and personal development are excellent.

Attendance	Attendance is satisfactory and there are very few unauthorised absences. Pupils are generally punctual and thereby make a good start to their day.
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Pupils' attitudes, values and behaviour are very considerable strengths of the school.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall: 96	Good	Good	Good

In almost two thirds of lessons, teaching is good or better and, in nearly a fifth, it is very good or excellent. The teaching of literacy and numeracy is good and sometimes very good and there are strengths in religious education, music, history, geography, physical education and art. Teachers cater for the needs of pupils well. They work at the right level of challenge for different groups of pupils, have good subject knowledge and are skilful at using questions which enable pupils to improve their understanding and performance.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The school is successful in providing a broad and balanced curriculum which is enhanced by the extensive range of extra curricular activities.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	In classrooms, pupils derive benefit from teachers' careful planning of appropriate tasks and the skilful support given by educational support assistants. However, work in some Key Stage 2 withdrawal sessions is not focused clearly enough and pupils' progress cannot be checked, monitored or accelerated.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Provision is good, with pupils receiving good support to develop their language skills further.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The provision in this area is a great strength of the school.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Pupils are well supervised and their personal needs are met in full. Arrangements for assessment are unsatisfactory and do not enable the school to track pupils' attainment and progress fully.

The school has a very good relationship with parents; they find the headteacher and staff very approachable and generally appreciate the quality of the information they receive. Pupils benefit from the rich variety and quality of work in the school; the curriculum is balanced well and provides successfully for the needs of all its pupils.



## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher provides very good leadership, giving very clear direction to the work of the school. Subject leaders are increasingly involved in managing and monitoring improvements, but there are unhelpful inconsistencies between the ways in which the upper and lower schools are led.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body has formed an effective partnership with the headteacher and senior staff. It has set appropriate priorities, but there are not enough regular and systematic checks in place to identify where the school is doing well and where improvements are needed.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Secure systems of monitoring, evaluation and development have been devised and are being implemented effectively. However, not enough use is being made of assessment data to inform decisions about areas for school improvement.
The strategic use of resources	Development planning is satisfactory and resource allocation is in line with the school's educational priorities.

The roles of the upper and lower school senior teachers are being established satisfactorily; however, their involvement in school improvement lacks clarity. In addition, the well-established consultation, communication and decision-making procedures in the lower school are not matched in the upper school. There is insufficient data analysis to enable the school to set targets for improvement and monitor progress towards them. The school is staffed well by teachers, learning support assistants and support staff. In general, resources and accommodation are adequate and used effectively. The governing body is aware of best value principles and is establishing systems for judging value for money; the application of these is at an early stage of development because spending decisions are not always linked to the analysis of performance data.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Their children like coming to school and are enthusiastic about learning.</li> <li>• The school is helping their children become mature.</li> <li>• The teaching is good.</li> <li>• They would feel comfortable approaching the school.</li> <li>• The school expects their children to work hard.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A small number say they would like more information about the range of activities on offer.</li> <li>• Some are concerned about the level of homework and would like more information about expectations.</li> <li>• Some feel they are not kept well enough informed about how their children are getting on.</li> </ul>

The inspection confirms the positive comments. No evidence was found to support the concerns about homework and information about pupils' progress but these have been discussed with school management.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. The general picture is one of standards being high for under fives and in line with national expectations by the end of Key Stages 1 and 2. By the time pupils leave the school, they are achieving well in line with national expectations in English mathematics and science.
2. Most children attend the school's nursery before admission to the school and all attend the reception classes. In these settings, they make good progress towards the recommended *desirable learning outcomes* and, by the age of five, their attainments are above average. They have good knowledge, skills and understanding in language and literacy and in mathematics, including numeracy. Their attainments in personal and social development and their knowledge and understanding of the world are also high; standards in physical and creative development are in line with those recommended for children in the foundation year.
3. Attainments in English are broadly average for both key stages. The 1999 results of the National Curriculum tests in English at Key Stage 1 show that standards were in line with the national average for reading, but below these for writing; when compared with similar schools, results in reading were broadly in line, but in writing, they were well below. At the end of Key Stage 2, standards were above average when compared both with the national figure and with similar schools. There are no significant differences between the performances of boys and girls. Trends in the last three years in reading and writing show some improvements in both key stages. Evidence from the inspection shows that pupils' attainment in English is within the average band in both key stages because of improvements made by the school in teaching. In addition, there are signs that the implementation of the literacy hour is having a very positive effect on standards and pupils' reading and writing are improving in Key Stage 1 and they are showing understanding and improved skills. Speaking and listening and writing at the end of Key Stage 2 are good with a majority of pupils demonstrating confidence and security in their work.
4. Standards in mathematics are high in Key Stage 1 and in line with national expectations in Key Stage 2. The 1999 national test results show that seven-year-olds performed better than the national average and their attainments were higher than those for pupils in similar schools. The national tests for eleven-year-olds showed that the school's performance was in line with national averages and those for similar schools. There were little differences between the boys' and girls' results at Key Stage 1, but at Key Stage 2, girls' results were above the national average and those for boys were close to it. Trends show overall improvements in results over the last three years for both key stages. The inspection bears out the information from these national tests. By the end of Key Stage 1, the majority of pupils are attaining better than average standards in number, algebra and shape. Pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 have a secure understanding of the application of mathematical knowledge and they have good facility with mental mathematics. As with English, there is clear evidence that the recently introduced national strategy is having a marked effect on the work and standards of pupils at both key stages.
5. In science, according to teachers' assessments at the end of Key Stage 1 in 1999, standards were well below the national average. Pupils reaching the expected standards at the end of Key Stage 1, as measured by teachers' assessments in 1999, were well below. The 1999 tests for Key Stage 2 show that the results were also well below the national average. Over the three-year period, there has been no significant improvement in the schools' performance; the performances of both boys and girls

were similar, with no significant variations. Inspection evidence shows that overall standards of attainment are improving and pupils' work is broadly in line with national expectations.

6. Overall attainments in information technology are also in line with national expectations for pupils throughout the school. By the age of eleven, the majority of the pupils achieve acceptable standards in computer literacy when compared with the national expectation. Pupils' achievements in communicating through text and imagery are better than those for handling data and control. Their progress is benefiting from opportunities to work in the recently established computer suite. The lack of opportunities for pupils to use computers in the classrooms is having a detrimental effect on them making better progress and consolidating the skills and understanding they have acquired.
7. Standards in religious education match the expectations set in the locally Agreed Syllabus. Pupils are developing an appropriate understanding and knowledge of Christianity and they demonstrate satisfactory knowledge of other religions such as Judaism, Islam and Hinduism.
8. By the end of Key Stage 1, the majority of pupils' attainments in art, design and technology, history, geography, music and physical education being in line with the national expectations for these subjects. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' attainments are very high in physical education, high in history, and those for art, design and technology, geography and music being generally in line with national expectations.
9. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in the early years and Key Stage 1. At Key Stage 2, they make satisfactory progress in their class work, with able support from their teacher and well-informed support assistants. This is not always matched when they are withdrawn from their classes in Key Stage 2 for additional literacy support and the learning targets set are not always clearly enough defined. Pupils with specific learning difficulties benefit from the highly structured and lively programme of work provided by specialist teachers and special needs support staff. Pupils with statements benefit from good quality individual support for work which is usually planned to match classroom activities.
10. Pupils with English as their additional language make good progress as a result of good provision which is related to their particular educational needs.
11. There have been improvements in the last three years in attainments in English and mathematics; the school has identified room for further improvements in these subjects and is working on these, making good use of recent national strategies. Science results are well below national averages; the school has taken action to secure improvements in pupils' attainments in this subject and this is having a positive impact. The school has set ambitious targets and is taking specific action to achieve these, supported by strong leadership, a shared will to succeed and practical strategies and plans to secure further improvements.

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

12. Pupils' attitudes to the school are very good and they are enthusiastic about learning. Most parents say their children look forward to coming to school, and they are happy and interested in the many activities on offer. They settle to work quickly and positively when they arrive and this helps them to make a good start to their day. Attendance is broadly in line with the national average.
13. Behaviour in lessons and around the school is very good and this makes a significant impact on pupils' learning. This represents an overall improvement since the last inspection and is as a result of teachers' generally higher expectations of good behaviour. Pupils play together happily and are supportive of one another when

working. In a literacy lesson in a reception class for example, children listened to the story they were being read very attentively and as a result were able to make a very good start on writing their own books. In a very small number of isolated lessons, where teachers' classroom management and organisation are not well established, pupils are sometimes a little noisy and disruptive. On rare occasions teachers spend some time dealing with behaviour rather than teaching and, as a result, pupils do not learn enough. There was one exclusion in the last school year.

14. Pupils work together extremely well and are able to form excellent relationships with one another and their teachers. From the earliest stage in the nursery, children are encouraged to develop a good attitude to their work so that they select activities confidently and play constructively and cooperatively. As they progress through the school, pupils work effectively in pairs and groups in many lessons showing evidence of excellent relationships and personal development; as a consequence, they are able to help one another and learn from each other's mistakes. In the information technology suite for example, they share the computers regularly and helped each other when required. They are considerate to each other and polite when speaking to adults. They show a mature level of understanding for the feelings, values and beliefs of others in personal and social education lessons. The youngest children talked about issues such as sharing and older children thought about and discussed the impact of their actions on others. Some Year 6 pupils in particular show a good deal of trust and openness toward each other by discussing sensibly the nature of personal feelings. The trust and openness shared between staff and pupils helps to create a happy, caring atmosphere in school where all pupils cope confidently with the required routines. By the time that they leave the school, pupils have very good understanding of how well they are doing and where they can make progress
15. Pupils are very willing to undertake responsibilities around school and show a high level of initiative in organising their own learning. Their work habits are very well established and, in most lessons, a good quantity and quality of work are achieved because pupils waste little time settling to their required tasks. They are helpful in undertaking duties such as acting as messengers and classroom and door monitors, and the oldest help the youngest to settle in the playground. The school council has a high profile and encourages pupils to feel involved effectively in the running of the school. A recent meeting has been concerned with discussion of a whole school risk assessment which they undertook, where their views of potential dangers and hazards were taken into account by the headteacher who took the necessary appropriate actions.
16. Rates of attendance are satisfactory and broadly in line with national averages as they were at the time of the previous inspection. There are very few unauthorised absences and pupils are generally punctual and settle to work quickly. Lessons now start promptly and finish on time, ensuring there is little time lost during the course of the day. This signifies an improvement since the last inspection.

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

17. The overall quality of teaching is good throughout the school. There are strengths in all year groups and in most subjects. Approximately two thirds of the teaching is good or better, with nearly a fifth being very good or excellent. Only one lesson was unsatisfactory. This represents a notable improvement since the previous inspection when approximately a quarter of teaching was unsatisfactory. Improvement has resulted from a commitment by teachers to improve and an effective programme for the monitoring and support of teaching, particularly in literacy and numeracy. The improvement in teaching has had a positive impact on pupils' learning and progress.
18. In all key stages, teachers have excellent relationships with the pupils. Teachers and pupils are pleased to see each other and greet each other warmly at the beginning of the day. Registration provides a calm start to the day and the time is often used to

reinforce numeracy and literacy, for example reception children count the number present and older pupils use the time to read quietly or complete written tasks.

19. The quality of teaching is good across all the areas of learning for the under-fives and the range of well planned activities results in the children making good progress. Teachers have a good understanding of how young children learn; they have established stimulating classrooms and adopt a lively approach. Where the teaching is good or better objectives for the session are clear and challenging and the tasks are focused to meet these. The links with the nursery makes a valuable contribution to the work of the reception classes and as a result of effective teamwork; the children soon adapt to the routine of school life, developing a good degree of independence and positive attitudes to learning.
20. Teaching is good at Key Stages 1 and 2. Teachers have good subject knowledge, together with a secure knowledge of teaching basic skills such as phonic skills and spelling. Lessons are well timed and planned in detail; they are generally well structured with a good balance between whole class, small group and individual teaching. Teachers take great care to match work to pupils' individual needs and they are especially skilled at pitching questions at the right level, making these more challenging for more able pupils. As a result, pupils are well motivated and make good progress in most lessons. Time is set aside at the end of many lessons, particularly in literacy and numeracy, for teachers to summarise and for pupils to reflect on what they have learned. Frequently, rather than simply introducing activities, teachers make clear to the pupils what they are supposed to be learning while carrying them out and learning objectives are displayed throughout the lesson. This helps pupils to understand that they can take some responsibility for their own learning.
21. Teachers are gaining expertise through support in school and in-service training. This is especially evident in the teaching of literacy and numeracy where very good lessons were observed in each subject. Science teaching is improving, as is information technology, when taught as a lesson. Other subjects such as religious education, art and music are taught well. An exceptional lesson was seen in physical education. History and geography are generally taught successfully through a series of topics. In design and technology, teaching is at least satisfactory.
22. Pupils' knowledge of what they have learned is good and this improves as they progress through the school. They are able to concentrate on the task in hand very well and work without direct supervision. This is an important factor in their good progress. They also enjoy their work and show mutual respect for the ideas of others. Teachers' marking and assessment in numeracy and literacy is good and individual targets are set. These give clear guidance for pupils, but in some classes, the marking of work in other subjects is inconsistent and it is not always clear from the comments what pupils have to do to improve their work.
23. Overall, pupils with special educational needs receive satisfactory teaching. In the majority of lessons, teachers distinguish between the needs of individual pupils to enable them to work at their own level. They plan carefully with support assistants to give pupils the benefit of individual or small group work carried out at a slower pace than that of the rest of the class. Class teachers know their pupils well and are skilled at pitching questioning at the right level for all pupils, including those with special needs. Provision for pupils with English as their additional language is good, with good support being provided to develop their language skills further.
24. Appropriate homework projects are set for pupils particularly in numeracy and literacy and especially in Year 6 classes to help pupils prepare for secondary education. Although some parents expressed concern about the nature and quality of homework, the inspection evidence is that current arrangements for the setting of homework are satisfactory.

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

25. The curriculum is broad, balanced and meets statutory requirements, with appropriate amounts of time allocated to each subject; the practice of withdrawing pupils for special educational needs support has resulted in some missing out on particular lessons in a regular basis. The early years' curriculum is based upon the *desirable learning outcomes* and is being implemented successfully. There are excellent links between the nursery and reception classes, which enhance the planning and learning opportunities. The implementation of the national literacy and numeracy strategies has been very effective throughout the school and this has resulted in high impact being made on the attainments and learning for pupils in English and mathematics. Pupils' learning and achievements are enhanced considerably by the variety of extra curricular activities provided, especially in music, physical education and the two extended trips taken by Key Stage 2 pupils annually. There are well-developed links with the local community which make a considerable contribution to pupils' learning; for example: St John's Church; Footscray Rugby Club; Charlton Athletic FC and Bexley Grammar school. Since the previous inspection, the music curriculum has been improved significantly. There has been unsatisfactory development in the use of information technology across and within all subjects of the curriculum at both key stages.
26. The majority of pupils with special educational needs benefit from a good quality broad curriculum, which is supported well by learning assistants. Pupils with statements are well catered for by the provision of individual help as recommended in their statements.
27. The school provides well for the personal and social development of its pupils. The excellent guidelines enhance planning for example in health education the school worked for and received the *Healthy School* award, for which it focused on healthy eating through health education and by encouraging pupils to bring a piece of fruit to eat at break times. The health education policy includes work at the appropriate levels for all pupils in order to raise their awareness about drugs. Sex education is taught through the health education programme with input from the school nurse to the older Key Stage 2 pupils. Older pupils are taking part in the local education authority's substance abuse programme and this has required a substantial commitment from the school leading to a high level of personal, social and health education.
28. The provision for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is very good and is a great strength in the school. Spiritual development is promoted well in many areas of the curriculum. A good example of this was in a religious education lesson that was taught where pupils acted the Seder meal rituals; all were quiet and respectful during the blessing. In all assemblies, pupils are given opportunities for prayer and quiet reflection. They develop an understanding of other faiths as in their work on the Hindu festival of Holi. Teachers maintain a stimulating environment with pleasing displays of art and artefacts. The pond area provides opportunities to study and wonder at the natural world.
29. Provision for moral development is very good with staff providing excellent role models; they reinforce good behaviour constantly through the use of rewards. School rules are displayed in all areas and these are used effectively by teachers and pupils as a means of supporting good behaviour and moral development. Assemblies on friendship and respect used stories very effectively to develop moral awareness and pupils took part in mature discussions about people they respected and gave thoughtful reasons for this. The school has a very caring ethos built upon mutual respect and support for others.
30. The school provides a very good environment and programme for social development; pupils are encouraged to work cooperatively, to share ideas and resources. Pupils share computer equipment very well. Pupils are given many opportunities to take

responsibility, class monitors are appointed and a school council meets weekly to express opinions and consider ideas for development. Pupils treat visitors and each other with friendliness, politeness and respect.

31. Many opportunities are provided for pupils' cultural development. They learn about the richness and diversity of their own and other cultures in many areas of the curriculum. Work was seen on Egypt and India which promoted greater awareness and understanding of the religions and cultures of these countries. Art is a particular strength and is used well to promote pupils' awareness of their own heritage and cultural backgrounds. An effective example was in Year 4, where pupils studied life in Bexley during the Victorian era and also created their own wallpaper designs based upon the work of William Morris, a former resident of Bexleyheath.

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

32. The school is a happy, caring community where each child is known individually. All staff and helpers work closely together to ensure that pupils' individual needs and requirements are fully met, thereby successfully implementing the school's aims of helping all to succeed.
33. Pupils are supervised well at work and play. Office staff, classroom assistants and meals supervisors all make a significant contribution to the care of the pupils as well as the teachers. The school takes a responsible line in matters of health and safety carrying out regular risk assessments to identify and deal with any potential hazards. The caretaker deals with day-to-day matters efficiently. A number of minor health and safety issues observed during the inspection were discussed fully with the headteacher and prompt actions were taken. Fire fighting and electrical equipment is checked regularly to ensure that it is in good working order and there are appropriate procedures for dealing with accidents, sickness and the administration of medicines. The headteacher is responsible for matters of child protection and procedures are effective. Teaching staff are made fully aware of up-to-date procedures, however classroom assistants and meals supervisors have not all had similar training.
34. The school provides a good level of support and guidance to its pupils for their personal development. Attendance is monitored regularly and good behaviour is encouraged very successfully. School rules are displayed prominently and parents feel that concerns about behaviour are always dealt with. They are pleased with the school's promotion of equal opportunities and anti-racist attitudes. The school council plays an important role in helping to deal with issues such as bullying and harassment, incidents of which are rare. The school's merit award system is appreciated by pupils and encourages them to strive successfully for high achievement in all aspects of school life. Pupils are enthusiastic about sharing their success with visitors.
35. Where it is helpful to do so, the school has well-established links with outside agencies to ensure that pupils receive any additional support. For example, there are regular visits by the speech therapist and education welfare officer. There is also a strong commitment to equal opportunities for all pupils, supported by a whole school policy which permeates through all aspects of school life, and an inclusive ethos for pupils with special educational needs.
36. Arrangements for assessment do not enable the school to monitor pupils' attainment and progress fully and consistently across all subjects and between key stages. There are good arrangements for assessing the work of pupils in English and mathematics, and this has improved since the last inspection, this effective practice has not been carried through in all subjects. There is generally inadequate use of assessment to guide future planning. Individual targets, which are shared with both pupils and parents, have not been identified, therefore making it difficult for all to understand what further progress is being planned over agreed periods of time.

37. There are effective systems in place for diagnosing and assessing pupils' special needs, which are in line with the requirements of the Code of Practice. The special needs register is fully up-to-date, and is checked and monitored regularly. The special needs coordinator and an education support assistant who has special training in specific learning difficulty, administer a range of diagnostic tests which help to pinpoint particular areas of difficulty in pupils identified by class teachers or whole-school testing as being particularly in need of support. A weakness in the assessment system is in the setting of individual education plans where targets are not always sufficiently precise to be measurable. As a result, teaching cannot be clearly focused and the impact of precious withdrawal time cannot be assessed. The requirements of statements are implemented well and annual reviews are carried out in line with statutory requirements.

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

38. Most parents have positive views of the school and express satisfaction with the support that their children receive. They are generally happy with standards of work and believe that the school does particularly well at supporting higher and lower attaining pupils. Although some parents expressed concern about the progress of pupils in the middle band and those in mixed age classes, inspection findings indicate that the progress of either groups is not affected. Parents are also pleased with the attitudes and values promoted and with pupils' behaviour in school. They appreciate that teachers are approachable and always make themselves available. They also feel that the headteacher is particularly responsive and open and that she will act on issues raised.
39. The school has good links with parents and carers to extend pupils' learning. Home school agreements are in place and outline clearly the responsibilities of home, school and pupil. Good quality information is provided to parents so that they are well informed about school life, but there are some omissions of required information in the prospectus and governors' annual report to parents. The prospectus, for example, does not report on national comparative data for test results at both key stages, and the governors' report does not give the date of the next parent governor election.
40. Annual reports on pupils' progress are detailed and parents appreciate their personal nature. However, not all report on attainment in design and technology, or on achievement in relation to National Curriculum levels. They are also not used to set targets for future learning. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are fully involved in discussing and monitoring their children's progress.
41. Open forums are held once a term to give parents the opportunity to become involved in decision-making about the school. Their views have recently been taken into account when making decisions about school security, playground provision and discipline. Parents often help out with school trips or with work in classrooms such as reading, art, science and some extra curricular clubs. In class, they fit into routines quickly as teachers provide them with very good guidance on how they can best assist pupils. Teachers ensure that pupils receive appropriate and challenging homework and parents particularly appreciate the mathematics work. Home school reading diaries show there is a high level of parental support for reading at Key Stage 1. Support for homework at Key Stage 2 is variable however, and some parents feel that greater clarity of expectations would be helpful; this is supported by evidence from the inspection. *Friends of Danson School Association* is very active in organising social events for the pupils, their families and friends and successful at raising extra money for the school.

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



42. The headteacher, together with the senior management team, gives very clear direction for the educational work of the school and this has resulted in a number of significant improvements being made since the last inspection. Her vision is based on high quality of educational provision throughout the school and her work is central in the school working assiduously towards its aims to help all pupils to achieve their full potential whilst being happy in the school environment. Staff, governors and the vast majority of parents have confidence in the way in which the school is led and managed and give the headteacher and the senior management team their active support. There is a strong commitment to good relationships throughout the school and a demonstrable commitment to equality of entitlement to all pupils and staff. The aims of the school are often to be seen in action in the classrooms and elsewhere in the school. For instance, in many lessons, pupils showed that they were competent and confident learners and that in and around the school, they behaved in a way which showed them to be responsible members of the school community. There is a will and capacity to succeed which is evident throughout the school, and that many of the initiatives which have been undertaken are being successful. For example, monitoring and supporting developments in teaching and the curriculum have resulted in significant improvements in the quality of education provided by the school.
43. Teaching is monitored and evaluated regularly and effectively. Evaluation reports are analytical and identify areas for further improvements. These reports feed into the school's appraisal system as part of its aim to become an accredited *Investors in People* organisation. The procedures have also laid secure foundations for the school's performance management system, to be introduced later this year.
44. The management structures of the school are developing well. Since the previous inspection, all subject leaders undertake their work with increasing effectiveness in contributing to the standards and quality of provision of their curriculum area. Some coordinators have too many key responsibilities and this has led to some problems in these being discharged effectively. The special educational needs coordinator is effective in seeing that all statutory requirements are met and that suitable support is provided for those pupils on the special needs register. The coordinator has gathered a good stock of resources and diagnostic testing materials, which are used to the benefit of pupils with special educational needs.
45. The school has recently opted for a senior management structure without a deputy headteacher. There are signs of success in this arrangement but there are differences in the ways in which the two senior teachers' roles are understood and interpreted. This has led to inconsistencies in the ways in which they carry out their tasks and interpret their involvement in school improvement. In particular, the well-established consultation, communication and decision-making procedures in the lower school are not matched in the upper school. This, in turn, has resulted in differences in the ways in which staff are informed and consulted depending on which part of the school they work. The senior teachers also lack sufficient involvement at present in the management of the school's assessment systems and in analysis of performance data at pupil, class, year and key stage levels. The senior management team does not make full use of information from assessments for tracking and monitoring the progress of individual pupils within each key stage in order to plan whole school strategies for improvement.
46. The governing body is working well in order to fulfil its statutory duties. Apart from some of the information requirements in the school prospectus and the governors' annual report, the school meets statutory requirements. Individual governors demonstrate great enthusiasm for, and commitment to, the school and are keen to be involved in securing further improvements in standards achieved and quality of the education provided. The curriculum committee of the governing body meets regularly, receiving reports from subject coordinators and updates on the school development plan. At present, its role is underdeveloped as it does not influence curriculum planning

sufficiently through careful analysis of the relative performances of subjects by key stage.

47. The partnership of the governing body with the senior management is at the heart of the success the school has already achieved and the capacity it has for further improvements. The ways in which governors are shaping the direction of the school is developing but there remains some degree of over-reliance on the headteacher. For instance, there are underdeveloped systems for the governing body to identify strengths and weaknesses in standards and quality in the school through receiving reports in an annual cycle of review. Development planning is satisfactory; the governors and headteacher consult widely to identify and agree priorities and resources are allocated according to the school's targets, including specific grants, and the spend is monitored carefully. Initial work is being undertaken on the principles of best value, but this is underdeveloped and not integrated fully into the school's management systems. The systems the governing body has to make judgements about the value for money which the school provides are similarly underdeveloped. There are some elements missing from the governors' annual report to parents.
48. The school is well staffed by suitably qualified teachers, learning assistants and other support staff. They are managed effectively and contribute well to maintaining and raising standards. Classroom support assistants contribute fully to the quality of education provided by the school and the office and site staff provide efficient, support to the headteacher, senior management team and professional staff. Increasing use is being made of new technologies for learning and for school administration purposes. At the time of the inspection, the school had taken delivery of a new set of computers to be networked and linked to the Internet. The accommodation is adequate and is used effectively to support learning. Staff work hard to create a stimulating work environment and high quality displays of pupils' work help to celebrate their success and encourage higher standards. Learning resources are sufficient to support the curriculum, used well and make a good contribution to learning and standards.

## WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

In order to build on the significant improvements made already, the governing body, headteacher and senior management should:

- strengthen further the role of the senior management team by:
  - making greater use of pupils' performance data in setting individual and whole school targets;
  - increasing the leadership functions of the senior teachers in managing and monitoring progress towards these targets;
  - ensuring greater consistency in the ways in which the leadership of the upper and lower schools is carried out.  
*(Paragraphs: 42 and 51)*
  
- set up consistent procedures for assessment in science, information technology and religious education based on the effective practice which has been established in English and mathematics.  
*(Paragraphs: 42, 83, 107 and 123)*
  
- improve provision for pupils with special educational needs by ensuring that:
  - targets set in individual education plans have clearly defined and measurable outcomes;
  - withdrawal work matches classroom activities wherever possible;
  - pupils with special educational needs do not miss out on their curriculum entitlements as a result of being withdrawn from their lessons.  
*(Paragraphs: 26, 30 and 43)*
  
- implement rigorously the priority set out in the school development plan to raise standards in information technology through:
  - setting up and using fully the newly purchased hardware and Internet system;
  - integrating information technology into all subject lesson plans;
  - establishing a rota system within each class to ensure that all pupils have regular and equal access and that computers are used regularly and efficiently;
  - setting focused targets in individual education plans to enable pupils with special educational needs to ensure that their needs are met more effectively through the use of information technology.  
*(Paragraphs: 7, and 107 to 109)*

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed

96

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

42

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
1	18	45	35	1	0	0

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

### Information about the school's pupils

#### Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	27	453
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	-	56

FTE means full-time equivalent.

#### Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1	3
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	6	83

#### 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	15
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	14

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.1
National comparative data	5.4

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0
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 1

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	1999	23	39	62

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	16	18	19
	Girls	32	31	34
	Total	48	49	53
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	78 (84)	79 (75)	85 (87)
	National	82 (80)	83 (81)	87 (84)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	18	20	18
	Girls	31	33	32
	Total	49	53	50
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	79 (82)	85 (85)	81 (88)
	National	82 (81)	86 (85)	87 (86)

Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest 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	1999	29	38	67

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	21	19	23
	Girls	28	26	26
	Total	49	45	49
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	73 (70)	67 (61)	73 (73)
	National	70 (65)	69 (59)	78 (69)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	21	20	24
	Girls	30	28	30
	Total	51	48	54
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	76 (72)	72 (63)	81 (73)
	National	68 (65)	69 (65)	75 (72)

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

### **Ethnic background of pupils**

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	6
Black – African heritage	3
Black – other	
Indian	17
Pakistani	
Bangladeshi	
Chinese	3
White	351
Any other minority ethnic group	10

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

### **Teachers and classes**

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

Total no. of qualified teachers (FTE)	17.1
No. of pupils per qualified teacher	31.9
Average class size	30.2

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

Total no. of education support staff	13
Total aggregate hours per week	152

#### **Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery**

Total no. of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
No. of pupils per qualified teacher	27

Total no. of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours per week	30

Number of pupils per FTE adult	13.5
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*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

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

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage		
Black – African heritage		
Black – other		
Indian		
Pakistani		
Bangladeshi		
Chinese		
White	1	
Other minority ethnic groups		

*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	1998/99
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	£
Total income	742,855
Total expenditure	720,314
Expenditure per pupil	1,418
Balance brought f/d from previous year	7,288
Balance carried forward to next year	29,829



## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out

500

Number of questionnaires returned

103

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	60	35	4	1	0
My child is making good progress in school.	41	45	11	1	3
Behaviour in the school is good.	25	63	3	2	7
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	19	56	20	4	0
The teaching is good.	37	56	3	0	4
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	18	56	20	3	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	46	46	7	1	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	45	47	4	0	5
The school works closely with parents.	20	50	24	1	5
The school is well led and managed.	37	48	10	1	5
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	33	62	4	0	1
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	20	49	15	1	16



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

### AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN UNDER FIVE

54. The children reach a good standard in all areas of learning in the foundation stage. They start school either in September or January and the majority have attended the nursery. The children usually have three terms in the nursery before they move to the reception class and these provide them with a good base of skills. Baseline assessments carried out early in the term in which the children start school indicate that attainment on entry is broadly average for the age group. Children, including those with special educational needs, make good progress throughout the foundation stage and are likely to meet or exceed the recommended *desirable learning outcomes* by the age of five. They are well prepared for work in the National Curriculum.
55. There are excellent links between the nursery and reception classes and the curriculum is planned to ensure they make good progress. The curriculum covers the recommended areas of learning with a smooth transition into National Curriculum subjects nearer the end of the stage. This approach impacts favourably on the children's learning and the standards they achieve. Teaching in personal and social development is good and this enables children to develop positive behaviour and attitudes to their work at an early stage.
56. The majority of children exceed the *desirable learning outcomes* in language and literacy by the age of five, due to consistently high quality teaching in this area of their learning. Nursery children listen well to stories and were enthralled by a story created by a visiting author. They talked confidently about the 'cakes' they make from play dough. They asked questions about where the wind comes from and tried to explain the effect of this on their 'spinners'. One child was able to explain that magnets are magnetic which is why they pick up the counters with wire around them. The development of literacy is effectively encouraged when children record the daily weather. Some children recognise words, match letters and write their names. They use books well. Children's awareness of how books are written is successfully promoted and as a result one child was able to talk about and use the word 'author'. There was good encouragement for a pupil with special needs to retell a story. Children under five in reception classes listen well and most talk confidently about what they are doing. In a topic about animals, they answered questions about the characteristics of animals. A few are very articulate, for instance, explaining preferences for books. Children make good progress in reading and while some are at an early stage in developing a sight vocabulary most read well for meaning, recognising familiar words. A few are already quite fluent, reading a simple text accurately or self-correcting if necessary. They are familiar with the structure of books, know the title and the roles of authors and illustrators. The home/school reading pact contributes successfully to progress in reading. Children make sound progress in writing. They form letters well and can copy writing accurately. A minority write a simple sentence independently.
57. Good progress is made in mathematics due to consistently good teaching and attainment is above average. In the nursery, children count numbers of children present as part of registration and learn to recognise numerals to match. They could say how many cakes were needed to make a tray full. They recognised and sometimes named shapes. They know bigger means heavier when applied to play dough and, for example, a full bucket of sand is heavier than one with less in it. Most know how old they are and some have a sound idea of time, knowing that their birthdays are a long way off. The under fives in reception classes count accurately and identify numbers as being between one and ten. They know the names of flat shapes and some solid ones. Some can say how many sides a shape has and describe the difference between squares and rectangles. Most understand what repeating patterns are and create these

by printing shapes or by making patterns on peg boards which they replicate on work sheets. Some children create complex sequences that involve shape and colour.

58. Children gain good knowledge and understanding of the world from a variety of experiences. In the nursery, they are prepared well for science and technology by making spinners and fliers and testing them. Some children know that the direction of the wind will affect their spinners and begin to see that the way a paper dart is thrown influences how far it will go. They use computer programmes such as *Dazzle* and *My World* confidently and have good mouse control. All the children in the reception classes are gaining good awareness of other places and languages by answering the register in French. Reception children planted cress and beans and this enabled them to learn effectively about the conditions needed to grow plants. They are introduced successfully to various ways of life and begin to understand well the differences and importance of rituals and customs in the Christian and Hindu religions.
59. Physical development is in line with those set out in the *desirable learning outcomes*. Nursery children climb confidently on the large equipment. They have good control of scissors and cut and stick adequately. They hold pencils and paint brushes well. By the time that they are five, children follow instructions carefully, move confidently, use space well and have sound control of their bodies. Many are good at throwing and catching beanbags. They follow a simple sequence to the words of a song, changing movements and a few are able to incorporate a change of direction. Nearly all children dress themselves and manage fastenings such as buckles and zips.
60. Creative development is good and promoted successfully through a variety of activities. Nursery children painted a large model of a bus using household brushes with good levels of control. They made good models from clay of their favourite toys that have recognisable features such as legs on a spider. They know their colours well and make sensible choices of colour in order to paint their models. They learned how to control the mouse on the computer effectively to make twirly patterns. The children paint and contribute to class collages collaboratively as part of topics. They begin think about design, making recognisable drawings of castles with well-defined crenellations. They made a good attempt at replicating the castles using construction apparatus. As part of a music lesson, children learn to listen for sounds very carefully when they take turns in removing items from a group on the mat. They sang '*Five Fat Sausages*' enthusiastically, in tune and in time and joined in singing in an assembly.

## ENGLISH

61. Overall standards of attainment in English in both key stages are above the national average. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils are keen and enthusiastic speakers and attain above the national average in their speaking and listening skills. They express their ideas clearly and listen carefully to their teacher and their peers in order to make appropriate responses. In reading, standards are average, with the majority well launched on reading. Some pupils who are attaining above national expectations already read a free choice of books, including information books. When these pupils read aloud, they showed that they have a very good familiarity with high-frequency words and letter sounds, and that they rely mainly on context to guess what new words might be. They talk confidently about favourite books and authors and many read regularly at home from their own bookstores as well as from school readers. Average and lower attaining readers sometimes use the strategies of sounding out new words or breaking them up into syllables, but they are rarely stuck for very long, largely because they read books at an appropriate level for their stage of development. In writing, the best pupils write neatly, forming and joining their letters correctly and using spelling and punctuation accurately. They choose words for effect and write in different ways according to the context. Average pupils, who comprise the majority, also write neatly and accurately but are less skilled at writing in different ways to create different effects. A small percentage of pupils, who are making a slow start on literacy, make

good progress because of the valuable support given by teachers and support assistants to ensure that they work at an appropriate pace and level.

62. By the end of Key Stage 2, attainment in speaking and listening is still above average, with pupils listening carefully to each other so that they can discuss and debate. They use a good range of vocabulary and some pupils are very good at taking on a different role and acting their part consistently and in a very lively way. When pupils work in pairs and groups, they are mature and sensible at getting themselves organised and work out practical systems so they can all contribute equally. Many pupils are very confident and fluent readers, showing real maturity in their taste for classic books and showing marked preferences for different authors and genres with *Harry Potter* and the *Katy* books coming high in the popularity stakes. Higher attainers analyse plot and character, infer and predict and even discuss stylistic aspects of the books they read. The majority of pupils read fluently, can access information in all areas of the curriculum and get pleasure and enjoyment from their reading. In writing, a smaller number of pupils are attaining above the national average, with the majority achieving what might be expected for their age and stage. All pupils write neatly, spelling and punctuating accurately, with the best writers presenting imaginative ideas in a very lively way. The majority of pupils know the conventions of different styles of writing, such as letters, stories, plays, factual accounts, instructional writing and poems. The presentation of work is generally good throughout the school, except for in Year 3, where pupils are still not confident about using joined writing consistently.
63. Teaching in the subject is almost uniformly good. Staff have good subject knowledge, use good quality texts, such as *The Iron Man* in Key Stage 1 or *Aesop's Fables* in Key Stage 2 to improve pupils' comprehension, and are very successful in encouraging pupils to work independently. Even at Key Stage 1, pupils can get on with writing on their own because teachers provide word cards and simple dictionaries and encourage pupils to work out spellings from their sounds. Teachers create a productive working atmosphere in their classrooms where pupils can settle down and concentrate on what they are asked to do. Pupils with special educational needs are generally well supported in lessons by support assistants working closely with the teachers and providing a slower pace or small group help where needed. Assessment in the subject is well developed, with the recording of group reading being a particular strength, since it is used both to evaluate progress and moderate future planning if required. Literacy skills are used well in history, where pupils are encouraged to discuss, deduce, debate and role-play, as well as to research and write in a variety of formats. They are also used well during mathematics lessons, where pupils are taught to use correct technical vocabulary. However, there is little planned opportunity to develop literacy further through many other subjects of the curriculum, by focusing for example, on the formal writing up of experiments in science or collecting and presenting data in geography.
64. The subject leaders, supported by the headteacher, have worked hard to ensure the full implementation of the National Literacy Strategy. They have trained and supported colleagues well and their continuing monitoring and evaluation both of teaching and of the curriculum have brought about consistency and uniformity in planning and practice. Resources are of good quality but the fact that they are not centrally stored and easily accessible is resulting in some lack of impact on learning. Teachers do not generally refer to National Curriculum levels in their planning and this makes it more difficult for them to assess pupils' progress against the national standards and to set appropriate targets.
65. The quantity and quality of fiction books in classrooms are good but the libraries in both key stages are not well organised or labelled and this inhibits the development of good library skills. Many of the books are outdated, though information books currently on display in classrooms are generally of better quality.
66. There has been a real improvement in English since the last inspection, where the report highlighted writing as below average in Key Stage 1. The report also considered the range of opportunities for writing to be limited at Key Stage 2 and found standards of pupils' presentation and teachers' planning to be poor overall. The introduction of the

national literacy strategy has provided an appropriate forum for a re-evaluation of the subject and its adoption has enabled the school to achieve higher standards.

## **MATHEMATICS**

67. Performance in standardised tests has improved over the past three years. Standards at the end of Key Stage 1 are above the national average and at the end of Key Stage 2, they are in line with the national average. The inspection found that, at the end of Key Stage 1, the majority of pupils attain above average standards in number, algebra and shape and their understanding of the application of mathematical knowledge is also high. At the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' attainments in number operations are in well in line with the average and their skills in mental mathematics are well in line with the national average, as is their understanding of the application of number.
68. Pupils' work in class and in their books shows good progress during the year and from year to year as they move through Key Stage 1. By the end of the key stage, the majority have an understanding of the value of digits in three-figure numbers and can add and subtract to two places up to 100. They count confidently in 2s, 3s, 5s and 10s with higher attaining pupils having good recall of multiplication tables. Pupils have good mental strategies and are able to use number facts to undertake simple computational sums quickly and correctly. Many pupils solve whole number problems involving simple division. The vast majority know even and odd numbers and are able to add coins to the value of 20p. Pupils have a secure grasp of mathematical vocabulary and are able to use it effectively. They know the names and properties of common two and three-dimensional shapes and measure accurately in centimetres.
69. At the end of Key Stage 2, the majority of children are competent in the four operations using and applying mental strategies. They are able to make decisions about which methods to use when faced with a mathematical problem and whether it is more efficient to do it mentally, use pencil and paper or use a calculator. They are proficient in the use of the inverse principle to check answers in either addition/subtraction and multiplication/division. They calculate fractions of whole numbers and percentages quickly and correctly; they use and apply the principle of equivalence of fractions in their work. They have a secure understanding of number facts and calculate square and cubic numbers quickly. Knowledge in data handling is average; pupils collect and interpret information and can construct frequency tables and line graphs. A Year 6 higher attaining group worked confidently on averages; pupils knew the differences between, and were able to find, the mode, median, mean and range of a data set using the Premier football league table.
70. Learning throughout the school is good because the teaching is good. The good quality and range of work is the result of teaching which is rooted in good secure subject knowledge and of teachers who have high expectations of their pupils' performance. Good exposition and modelling help the children to understand better what is to be learned and well-structured lessons managed at a brisk pace keep pupils interested and involved. A successful feature in promoting high quality learning throughout the school is the teachers' habit of setting out the learning objectives of the lesson. This enables pupils to understand more clearly what they are expected to learn and enables them to make their own judgements about their progress towards this outcome. In both key stages, teachers are very skilful at asking questions which are targeted for individual pupils and builds their understanding and enables teachers to assess progress as the lesson proceeds. Teachers know their pupils well and assess progress systematically, and this enables them to provide activities at the right levels for all pupils to make progress. During the main mathematics activity time, work is prepared at different levels so that all pupils, including those with special educational needs make gains in their understanding and skills. Very good use is made of well-briefed learning assistants, who are skilled at supporting the needs of the lowest attainers, encouraging them to make good progress. The strategy of setting for some

lessons enables the provision of work which is designed to enable pupils' needs to be met more effectively. The use of calculators is very effective from Year 4 onwards, but, in general, not enough use is made of information technology to support and improve pupils' mathematical learning.

71. Pupils' responses and attitudes to mathematics are very positive throughout the school. The pupils have captured teachers' enthusiasm for the subject throughout the school. They are keen and eager and show commitment and interest in the subject. They behave well throughout their lessons because of this. They have very good relationships with their teachers and with each other, and show maturity and respect for each other's feelings; for instance, when pupils make mistakes in giving an answer in plenary sessions, other pupils are empathetic and supportive. As they grow older and progress through the school, pupils take on greater responsibility for their own learning. For instance, by the end of Key Stage 2, pupils assess their own and each others' work and make helpful evaluative comments on ways to improve.
72. Teaching and learning is benefiting from the introduction of the national numeracy strategy. Lessons are planned well, with learning outcomes which relate both to curriculum requirements and to the specific educational needs of the class. Teachers' plans rarely make reference to the use of information technology to support pupils' mathematical development and this is having an adverse effect on learning, particularly in data and information handling. The subject is benefiting from effective subject leadership, with each key stage having a dedicated and knowledgeable leader. Good coordination between the leaders, together with the support of the headteacher, has resulted in effective monitoring and development of the curriculum and teaching.
73. There have been improvements in standards, teaching and leadership in mathematics since the last inspection.

## **SCIENCE**

74. Over the past three years, results in standardised tests have been below the national average. However, the school has worked hard to improve standards recently and has made good progress, particularly by the end of Key Stage 2. This improvement in standards is supported by the inspection findings in classwork and in pupils' workbooks.
75. The reasons for recent improvements are clear. The school is now rigorous in following an organised scheme of work which ensures consistency and continuity in learning. Pupils are working in attainment groups in Year 6 to provide extra challenge for the high attainers and appropriate levels of teaching for average and lower attaining pupils. The main reason for improvement is that there is some consistently good teaching of science in the school, particularly at Key Stage 2.
76. In Key Stage 1, pupils observe with attention to detail, and describe what they see using simple but appropriate language. They know that humans need food and water to stay alive; the correct types of food to eat; and the names of the external body parts. Year 2 pupils are developing good recording skills and some pupils produce clear written accounts. Pupils know about the properties of materials. They know which materials are waterproof and which are absorbent. They raise their own questions and make predictions. Some pupils make good use of reference books to find out the answers to their questions.
77. In Key Stage 2, pupils recognise relationships in the food chain, explain the importance of health and diet in animals and use observable features to classify plants and animals. Older pupils name parts of plants and flowers and identify the major organs and functions of the body. In studying materials and their properties, pupils identify the properties of common materials and describe similarities and differences. They know that some materials come from living things. Through the study of physical processes,

pupils recognise the need for a battery and a complete circuit for electrical devices to work, that light travels in a straight line and objects through which light is unable to pass cause shadows. Pupils record work accurately and respond in lessons with appropriate ideas and show they have a grasp of the topic being taught. They display sound knowledge and understanding in current work and have good recall of their previous work.

78. In experimental and investigative science, pupils studied the separation of mixtures. They made detailed observations and wrote clear descriptions about what they have seen. They predict what might happen with a degree of accuracy and suggest how they might test and record their ideas with appropriate controls.
79. In both key stages, the quality of learning and teaching are satisfactory overall and they are often good when the teachers' subject knowledge is secure and careful planning meets the learning needs of the pupils. Pupils are encouraged successfully to develop their own good use of scientific language which they use both in oral discussions and in their writing. For example, pupils in a Year 2 class discussed the distinction between magnetic and non-magnetic materials with confidence and this made a contribution to their literacy skills. All pupils have positive attitudes towards the subject. They enjoy science, follow instructions carefully, work well in small groups or paired work and discuss their work constructively. In most classes, good routines have been established for approaching science work. Where pupils are inattentive, it is usually because they are unclear about what is expected. When teaching is good, pupils respond accordingly and work at a good pace. They compare their ideas and results with those of others in the class, checking the outcomes of their experiments. Although some pupils have begun to use the CD-Roms to retrieve information, the use of the computer to broaden science skills and knowledge, and for data handling, is lacking throughout the school.
80. Planning and preparation are secure; teachers explain tasks clearly so that pupils are clear about what is to be learned. Teachers intervene well to challenge and extend individual pupils' thinking and to encourage greater accuracy of observation during practical work. Class control and management is very good and this enables pupils to get on with their work in a purposeful learning environment. Occasionally, teachers dominate some investigations and do not allow enough pupil participation; this results in pupils having insufficient opportunities to think for themselves. The support staff are used effectively in science activities to give more individual attention and to support behaviour.
81. The procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are unsatisfactory, as there are no clear consistent records. Work is marked regularly, but it does not always take pupils' understanding forward because it is not sufficiently evaluative. Targets for individual pupils are not set or shared with both pupils and their parents. The displays of science in the school are interactive and 'hands on'. Good use is made of both the school and the local environment. Visits to places of scientific interest such as the science museum or theatre group activities add an extra dimension.
82. Throughout the period since the last inspection, science results have declined. However, the rigorous implementation of detailed practical plans to improve science results, together with robust programmes of monitoring and support, are having a discernible and positive impact on standards of pupils' work.

## **ART**

83. Standards of attainment are in line with national expectations and high in some aspects throughout the school; this position has been maintained since the previous inspection. Pupils display enthusiasm for, and pride in, their work and have access to a range of techniques and variety of media at both key stages. When pupils were doing close

observational work in drawing and painting in Key Stage 2, they showed good improvement as pupils progress through the school. For example, drawings of toys in Year 2 and polyanthus plants in Year 6 showed great accuracy in proportion and detail appropriate to the ages of the pupils. Displays around the school showed pupils studying the work of a variety of artists with Year 3 pupils using the work of Mondrian, Seurat, and Turner successfully to look at different techniques of colour use. Portraits by Year 4 showed sensitivity in the use of tone and skin colour.

84. The quality of teaching in lessons is at least satisfactory and sometimes good. Learning objectives are clear and resources consistently well organised; these factors helped pupils' learning. In one class, good emphasis was placed by the teacher on the need for a quiet working atmosphere and this achieved a greater degree of concentration whilst pupils were engaged in creating interwoven Anglo-Saxon designs. In Year 3, careful demonstration of painting techniques ensured that the pupils, who watched attentively, were able to apply these to their own work with success. Intervention by the teacher in Year 2 enabled pupils to develop close observation skills when drawing a bicycle; they were encouraged to support each other and share ideas. Pupils enjoy art and stay focused on their work discussing aspects of it readily. Year 3 pupils explained confidently the papier-mâché technique in which they were involved. They became engrossed in their work and were highly motivated to produce good quality products.
85. Whole school planning for art ensures coverage of all aspects of the National Curriculum. Guidelines provide adequate support for non-specialist teachers who are well supported by the subject coordinator. The curriculum is monitored effectively through scrutiny of medium term planning and good displays of work. Resources for art are adequate and well used.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

86. Few lessons were timetabled during the inspection period and it is not possible to make a judgement on the quality of teaching. The scrutiny of work and discussion with teachers and pupils indicates that throughout the school, the pupils make satisfactory gains in learning in the making element of the subject and that the quality of the work has been maintained since the last inspection. The pupils' ability to design, modify and evaluate their work is underdeveloped.
87. When designing and making, the pupils can explain what they are doing and describe the properties of the materials they are using. During the inspection, this was evident in the way the pupils described their involvement in history projects, when, for example, they made a variety of Egyptian artefacts. On many occasions, pupils demonstrated initiative and showed an awareness of how things around them are designed and used for specific purposes. All pupils work with an appropriate range of materials and tools on focused practical tasks in which they are able to use their knowledge and develop and practise particular skills. Pupils tackle tasks confidently and competently. They work well together and are prepared to watch, listen and learn from others. They are keen to discuss their ideas and contribute to group discussions and work safely.
88. Planning incorporates good links with other subjects. Links are evident with religious and cultural education when pupils designed and made Christmas cards and these reinforced the importance of design and technology within the curriculum. Teachers also linked the subject to science, when pupils designed a torch, having previously learned about electrical circuits. There is not enough emphasis placed on pupils' use of technical vocabulary and this restricts pupils' abilities to develop a deeper understanding of their work and explain their solutions fully. Pupils have few opportunities to draw, modify and assess their products, they are restricted in their abilities to evaluate their work as it develops. Staff give due attention to health and safety issues.

89. The previous report found weaknesses in assessment procedures and the organisation of the resources. The school still has to deal with these issues.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

90. Standards in geography are in line with expectations at the end of both key stages with some strengths in fieldwork in Key Stage 2.
91. Key Stage 1 pupils make simple maps to follow the route in Rosie's walk using positional language such as over, around, past and through. Sound planning enables Year 2 pupils to develop map work using the local area. They extend their understanding by using globes to locate the Arctic and Antarctic and find out about how people live in cold places. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils have good understanding of the aspects they have studied, particularly the work on the flow of rivers that they observed and tested during their trip to Sayers Croft. They have sound ideas about the effects of the flow on riverbanks and know about erosion and meanders. They recall differences in settlements well by comparing the transport, pollution, flooding risks and crime levels in Welling and Utrecht. They are beginning to understand the effect that natural features, agriculture or industry has on places. Pupils have learned to use compasses when orienteering. They are keen to talk about what they have learned and show a real interest in the subject. They also make good links between geography and the places and events they study in history.
92. No lessons were seen at the end of Key Stage 2 but displays, work in pupils' books and discussion with them indicates that the teaching and learning in geography is at least satisfactory, and sometimes good, in both key stages. Good teaching is characterised by good planning, good subject understanding and enthusiasm which generates a high level of interest in pupils. Well-paced lessons ensure a good amount of work is covered and focused questions probe pupils' thinking. For example, from their work, it was evident that Year 5 pupils had collected data about changes in land use on a train journey from Welling to Charing Cross from which they constructed charts to show what they found. They used symbols and scales appropriately and took care in presentation. They showed a real interest in the work and concentrated well throughout the lesson. Work was planned to take account of different learning needs of pupils by using additional resources such as photographs. Well-timed interventions by the teacher helped pupils to maintain a good pace of learning and to focus their ideas on trends in land use so that pupils were able to develop their understanding of the effect of factors such as the growth of railways. There is good encouragement for pupils to collaborate on tasks including boy/girl pairs. In otherwise successful lessons there is sometimes a loss of pace so pupils make less progress than they could. Opportunities are sometimes missed to promote literacy in the subject through more extended writing which supports geographical concepts and vocabulary. Pupils with special needs are well catered for within the subject but regularly miss half the lesson, as they are withdrawn for literacy support; this is resulting in them not having access to their full entitlement in this subject,
93. The subject is led well and very good guidance is provided for planning the subject which is based on an enquiry approach and systematic development of skills. This is evident in much of the work seen and has a positive impact on standards. The immediate and wider locality is well used and the subject is considerably enhanced by the geography field trip to Sayers Croft and the school journey that is usually to the Isle of Wight. Good understanding of different cultures is fostered through comparative studies.

## **HISTORY**



94. No lessons were seen in Key Stage 1, but a scrutiny of pupils' books shows that pupils have studied and compared artefacts from the past and present, developing sound historical research and enquiry skills and that they have a well-founded sense of chronology. Their attainment is in line with expectations for their age and stage. In Key Stage 2, standards of work are generally higher than national expectations, especially in terms of the development of historical skills. In all the lessons, pupils showed clear understanding of the importance of considering historical evidence, of consulting and checking a range of historical sources and understood how different opinions can influence our understanding of historical contexts. Their historical knowledge is also good and pupils are keen to tell visitors what they know about the periods are studying. The subject has maintained its sound status since the last inspection, where work in Key Stage 1 was found to be above average, and that in Key Stage 2 to be in line with national expectations.
95. Teaching is generally consistently good and sometimes very good. Teachers give proper and appropriate emphasis to the study of artefacts, of which the school has a good number and pupils enjoy looking at objects and photographs and speculating on what they could be. One particularly inspiring lesson involved pupils in looking at the contents of a rubbish bag and deducing what they could reveal about the family that had discarded them. This activity gave pupils a real insight into how historians and archaeologists work and their investigative skills improved during the lesson. In another lesson about the Egyptians, pupils had done their own research into Ancient Egyptian civilisation, using a structured questionnaire to find out what they needed to know and developing a good knowledge base as a result. Lively and interactive displays around the school encourage pupils to reflect on aspects of the past and to draw their own conclusions from the evidence they see. In discussion, some pupils said they were so motivated by the subject that they were writing their own books or doing their own projects at home, using the local library and family museum visits as a resource. A range of visits, for example to William Morris's house or the Museum of London, enriches teaching and there is good cross-curricular linkage to art and English.
96. The subject is led very well and very enthusiastically. So far, there has been no opportunity for formal monitoring, which has resulted in some variation in the quality of teaching and learning. Teachers' planning is checked and staff are provided with informal support and encouragement. The scheme of work is well structured and includes plans for assessment, which have not yet been implemented.

## **INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY**

97. By the end of both key stages, pupils' attainment in communication and information is in line with national expectations. The older pupils have not made as much progress as the younger ones because they have only recently been able to work with the new hardware and software. Standards in communicating through text and imagery are improving. The programmes of study for these have not yet been covered fully in the information and communication technology curriculum.
98. As they progress through the school, most pupils are gaining confidence and enjoy using the keyboard and the mouse. However, there is a general lack of appreciation of the value and impact of information technology upon our every day lives. By the time pupils leave the school, they have only a limited knowledge of the facilities within the program they are using, except in the case of the word-processing or simulation packages.
99. Pupils in Key Stage 1 communicate information by making good use of a word-processing program; for example, when redrafting work in English. They change the colour and size of the font to enhance the appearance of the text. Most pupils use the keys and the mouse successfully to direct the cursor around the screen, and create attractive pictures using a variety of tools on an art program. With the help of an adult

they save, access and print their work. Pupils have opportunities to use tape players to listen to stories and some use tape recorders.

100. In Key Stage 2, the planning according to the new scheme of work is only just beginning to take effect and not all the aspects of each programme of study are taught formally but elements often appear in other curriculum areas. In history, pupils use an encyclopaedia to research information about the Romans and, in geography, they find out about rivers. They use maths programs to reinforce their learning and write their own programs to enable the computer to draw mathematical shapes. They make good use of calculators. Pupils use a word-processing package in their English work. They show competence in calling up the program from the 'contents' screen. They use the centre, space and backspace keys appropriately and use the mouse competently and switch between upper and lower case letters with ease. Opportunities for pupils to use information technology throughout all the subjects of the curriculum for the purposes of data-handling, monitoring and modelling are insufficient and this affects their attainments adversely.
101. Pupils make satisfactory gains in their learning in both key stages, although the more able pupils do not forge ahead as they should and the pupils with special educational needs do not always use information technology sufficiently as an additional aid to learning.
102. They are enthusiastic about information technology. Pupils are very pleased when they retrieve the appropriate information in an adventure game. There is a clear appreciation of the recently purchased hard and supporting software and pupils are keen to exploit every opportunity to use it. They work sensibly and carefully at the machines, and higher attaining pupils help and support the less able pupils.
103. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall and one very good lesson was observed. A positive move is the introduction of whole class lessons, in the new computer suite, to demonstrate new skills. The management of pupils is good and teachers are able to explain practical tasks to a class of approximately thirty pupils. Work is planned well and based securely on the scheme of work. This ensures that all aspects of the subject are covered. Support staff are briefed well and they, along with an adult helper, make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning, especially in Key Stage 1. Teaching is effective where software relating to the current topic is available and pupils are given a problem to solve; such as writing a program to move the cursor in different directions or inputting information on their favourite things to see which is the most popular. Some teachers have yet to find the correct balance between allowing the pupils to explore and experiment with the software and intervening at the correct moment to move learning forward. A number of teachers lack information technology expertise and offer activities that are not always relevant or at the required level to ensure the pupils' learning. There is too little monitoring of attainment of individual pupils to assist the planning of activities to match their needs; assessment systems and records are not developed sufficiently to track pupils' progress and development in this important area of their work.
104. Within classrooms, work is organised as one of a number of activities and small groups of pupils work at computers in English, mathematics and art lessons. There are times throughout the day when computers are not used enough to support work in other subjects and to give pupils the opportunity to consolidate their skills in a variety of contexts. The absence of a systematic rota system in every class, means that all pupils do not have sufficient or effective access to computers.
105. Improvement of information technology was a key issue in the previous report. The school has moved forward but progress on implementing the action plan has been slow. The coordinator has clear plans for information technology and is creating a good ethos for learning in the subject. He is assessing and devising supportive strategies in a systematic way to raise the levels of individual staff expertise. He is supported in his

work by the headteacher and governors who have made resources available; these have been augmented effectively with a bid for national funding.

## **MUSIC**

106. Attainment in both key stages is in line with national expectations. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils are able to sing in tune and maintain the correct tempo. Year 3 pupils demonstrate well their ability to use a known song to compose their own version. In Year 4, pupils knew and understood the terms minim, crotchet and quaver and were able to use this knowledge and understanding in their own compositions in ways which demonstrated sense of rhythm, dynamics and pitch. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils can perform confidently and they are able to compose simple pieces to achieve a desired effect. They listen with attention to detail and compare music from different traditions using appropriate musical vocabulary.
107. Teaching and learning are good. Good use of questioning by teachers enabled pupils to recall previous work and build upon it. Pupils are encouraged to listen to music carefully and skilful intervention into group work by teachers enables pupils to identify ways they could improve their compositions. Clear learning intentions and well-organised resources ensure that pupils have a good understanding of the task. Good use is made of plenary sessions to discuss what had been learned and to assess pupils' learning. Cross-curricular links are good; for example, in Year 2, discussion took place on the metal instruments, metals being the science focus for the term. Poetry was used as a starting point for investigating sounds.
108. Pupils clearly enjoy their lessons and handle instruments with care. They have good attitudes to music; they listen responsively to the work of famous composers such as Schumann as they entered and left the hall for assembly. Pupils' behaviour in lessons is generally good and supported their learning. Concentration in music is good especially when pupils work in groups on their own compositions. Music contributes to the cultural provision: for example, Year 1 pupils were given opportunities to handle African instruments. The curriculum is enhanced by the variety of extra curricular activities offered to the pupils including a drum club, fife and recorder groups, keyboard club, choir and instrumental tuition in a range of instruments which then make up the school orchestra. Through this range of activities, pupils have many good opportunities to improve group performance.
109. Extensive improvements to the music curriculum have been made since the previous inspection. The subject coordinator has completed the action plan fully and has provided an excellent policy and guidelines to support the teaching of non-specialists.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

110. Standards across the school are good with pupils reaching a very high standard. In a Year 1 and 2 class, pupils used the large apparatus with confidence achieving a good standard in balance. In Year 2, the skills of throwing and catching are developing well with pupils demonstrating increasing levels of accuracy. High attainment of Key Stage 2 pupils was seen in a swimming lesson led by the subject coordinator and very high achievements were seen in an outdoor games session, which was taken by a visiting rugby specialist. Year 4 pupils demonstrated a sequence of movements successfully using different means of turning, rolling and balance.
111. The teaching of physical education is never less than satisfactory and is occasionally very good or excellent, especially where there is a high level of teacher expertise. Lessons are well planned with clear learning intentions. Each session contains suitable warm up and cool down elements. Pupils are selected to demonstrate their achievements and this is used as means to extend the skills of others. During a swimming lesson, a pupil showed the correct head position to use in the crawl and this

helped to improve the performance of others. High standards of behaviour in physical education have a positive effective on attainment. Pupils cooperate well and this was demonstrated in a Year 4 lesson where pupils worked together to produce a movement sequence. Levels of concentration are high when pupils are engaged in activities or watching their peers.

112. The physical education coordinator supports the subject very well and visiting specialists, who work alongside class teachers, have provided high quality in-service training. There is a good policy with guidelines to support non-specialist teachers. Medium term planning is good achieving the necessary balance between gymnastics, dance and games. The coordinator monitors these plans and offers guidance and support for the teaching of skills. Resources are good with the accommodation for sport both indoors and outdoors excellent. A range of extra curricular activities enhances the curriculum. After school clubs in football, netball, rugby, cricket, fencing and dance operate in the appropriate season. The London Broncos offer specialist coaching in rugby; Charlton FC provides coaching in football and Kent CCC with cricket. Parents also support with line dancing and judo clubs. Due regard is given to equal opportunities with boys and girls given access to the full range of sports. In all lessons seen, health and safety issues were given a high priority, for example long hair was tied back, ear rings removed or covered and apparatus handled correctly. Safety rules are displayed in the hall with teachers constantly making reference to them.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

113. Attainment in religious education matches the expectations of the locally Agreed Syllabus at the end of both key stages. Good progress has been made since the last inspection and standards have improved overall due to the improvements in the quality of teaching.
114. In Key Stage 1, pupils develop a good understanding of special times and festivals of Christianity and other faiths. They know why people go to church for special occasions such as Harvest Festivals and Christmas and write prayers thanking God for his gifts. They compare special times and customs by studying elements of Hinduism and Judaism and similarities in forms of worship. They also understand that different religions have special books and their own stories.
115. Key Stage 2 pupils know about the life of Jesus, his ministry and teachings and how he used his disciples to work with him. They also understand more about the lives and faiths of people and religious leaders who are held up as examples to others. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils have a secure knowledge of Christianity and of some features of other major world religions. They understand that sacred writings are central to the traditions of the various faiths and that the Bible is made up of different types of books. Pupils discuss moral issues such as those contained in the Ten Commandments and sacred writings with understanding and work cooperatively in pairs or groups. They make good progress when comparing special times in the family and different ways of worshipping both at home and at places of worship. These studies enrich pupils' literacy skills as well as their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
116. The quality of teaching is almost always good. Teachers plan their work well, have good relationships with pupils, value their opinions and keep them focused skilfully on the point of the lesson. They are sensitive to children's different beliefs and encourage pupils successfully to share their experiences. Good class management ensures that all pupils take part in discussion productively. Resources are used well to stimulate pupils' interest. In one lesson, the teacher introduced the idea of special times and family festivals by setting up a Seder meal which held the pupils' attention and prompted some keen questions. Teachers use key words to help reinforce learning and information technology is used occasionally as a means of illustrating and developing

ideas. A variety of tasks is presented to pupils to ensure and extend understanding, however some of the written work in books and folders is incomplete and not all classes make good use of the information technology provision. Pupils listen attentively and are keen to answer and find out more. They show interest by asking questions, and are willing to share their own experiences. They show interest and respect for other customs, for example when learning about how babies are welcomed into the Hindu family.

117. The scheme for religious education is based on the local authority's Agreed Syllabus and has been recently revised by the coordinator for most year groups. The teachers benefit from her support and she assists them with planning and ideas. There are insufficient opportunities for monitoring and reviewing the teaching and assessment of religious education; this has resulted in an unacceptably wide variations between the judgements made by teachers as to the standards being achieved. The school has a good range of artefacts and books, which are well organised and readily available to give practical support to the teaching of different religions. In addition the school makes good use of outside speakers and visitors such as the local vicar and lay preachers. The school has a constructive partnership with Christian Resources in Bexley Schools (CRIBS) which uses the arts to explore the story of Jesus.