

INSPECTION REPORT

KEMSING PRIMARY SCHOOL

Sevenoaks

LEA area: Kent

Unique reference number: 118277

Headteacher: Mr M Thomas

Reporting inspector: Mrs C Skinner
23160

Dates of inspection: 12th-14th February 2001

Inspection number: 193821

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

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	5 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	West End Kemsing Sevenoaks Kent
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body, Kemsing Primary School
Name of chair of governors:	Mr J Allen
Date of previous inspection:	February 1997

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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23160	Carole Skinner	Registered inspector	Art, design and technology	The school's results and pupils' achievements. How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed?
9588	Tony West	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development. How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
23434	Marie Gibbon	Team inspector	English, history, religious education, special educational needs.	
18083	Judith Howell	Team inspector	Science, geography, music, Foundation Stage.	
16492	Bob Lever	Team inspector	Mathematics, information and communication technology, physical education, equal opportunities.	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Kemsing Primary School educates boys and girls between the ages of four and 11. There are 150 pupils on roll altogether, of whom five attend part-time in the Reception class. There are similar numbers of boys and girls on roll. The school is smaller than the average primary school. There are 53 pupils (35 per cent) on the school's register of special educational needs, which is above the national average. A high proportion of these pupils are in Years 2 and 6. One pupil has a statement of special educational need, which is broadly in line with the national average. Approximately one per cent of the pupils are from ethnic minority backgrounds, which is lower than average. All of the pupils speak English as their first language. Six pupils are travellers, but only two of these were present at the time of the inspection. Sixteen per cent of the pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals, which is broadly average. During the last school year, four pupils joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission, and five left it at times other than those of the normal leaving or transfer. Attainment on entry to the school varies from year to year but is broadly average.

The inspection of this school included a detailed inspection of its provision for pupils with special educational needs.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a good school with many very good features. The leadership and management of the school are very good and the quality of teaching is consistently good. These factors have contributed to rising standards and considerable improvement in many aspects of the school's provision. In 2000, the school was cited by the Department for Education and Employment as one of the thirteen schools in Kent to have made significant improvement. The school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- The very good leadership and management of the school, provided by the headteacher, other staff with management responsibilities and the governors, ensure that there is clear direction for the school and a strong commitment to further improvement.
- The consistently good quality of teaching throughout the school helps the pupils to make good progress in their learning and achieve well.
- The school's very good provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is reflected in the pupils' very good attitudes towards their work and the very good relationships between pupils and with adults.
- The good quality provision for pupils with special educational needs helps them to achieve good standards in relation to their previous attainment.
- The curriculum is well-planned, varied and interesting, places a very good emphasis on opportunities in the arts and physical education, and is enhanced by a very good range of activities outside of lessons.
- The school has developed a very good partnership with parents and the local community, which contributes very well to pupils' learning.

What could be improved

- The standards achieved by pupils in the content and style of writing at Key Stage 2.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school's last full inspection was in February 1997, at which time it was made subject to special measures. Since then it has made a very good improvement. The present headteacher was appointed in January 1998. By July 1998, the school had made sufficient improvement to be removed from special

measures. The school has continued to improve and is now achieving high standards in many areas of its work. Significant improvements in the quality of the leadership and management at all levels have been instrumental in raising standards. There has been a very good improvement in the quality of teaching, especially at Key Stage 2. For example, in 1997, only 61 per cent of the teaching was satisfactory or better. In this inspection, all of the teaching was at least satisfactory and 80 per cent was good or better. The headteacher has been successful in raising the morale of the staff, improving the pupils' self-esteem and enhancing the school's reputation in the local community. Governors have become much more involved in, and knowledgeable about, the school and play a much greater part in determining its direction. The key issues from previous inspections have been addressed with enthusiasm and determination, and the school has a very good capacity to continue to improve in the future.

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
	1998	1999	2000	2000
English	A	D	A	A*
mathematics	B	D	B	B
science	A	E	A	A

Key	
Very high	A*
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E

The information above shows that this school's results in national tests have fluctuated from year to year. This is largely due to the small numbers of pupils involved and significant variations in the proportion of pupils with special educational needs between year groups. Pupils have also performed better in English and science than in mathematics. The school analysed the reasons for this and has placed greater emphasis on improving pupils' capabilities in mental mathematics, which is already having a good effect. In 2000, the school was in the top five per cent of similar schools nationally in English. The school comfortably exceeded its targets for the percentage of pupils expected to reach Level 4 in the national tests in 2000. It has set lower, but realistic and sufficiently challenging targets for the current Year 6 in the 2001 tests. In this year group, 47 per cent of the pupils are on the school's register of special educational needs, which is much higher than the previous year. The findings of the inspection are that standards are average, overall, in Year 6 in English, mathematics and science. The proportion of more able pupils is in line with that seen nationally, but the percentage of less able pupils is higher. The school is providing good support and additional help with literacy and numeracy in Year 6 to boost the attainment of less able pupils. In English, standards in speaking, listening and reading are in line with national expectations, but those in writing are below average. In information and communication technology, art and music, standards are above average. In all other subjects, they are similar to those expected of 11 year olds.

The inspection findings show that standards in Year 2, where there is also a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs, are above average in music and average in all other subjects. Children in the Foundation Stage are on course to reach above average standards in their personal, social and emotional development. In all other areas of learning, they are on course to reach the standards expected of children by the end of the Reception year. Overall, pupils make good progress in their learning during their time in school and achieve well. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well in relation to their previous attainment.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils approach their work with interest and enthusiasm and take a pride in all they do. They participate eagerly in the wide range of activities that the school offers.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Pupils respond positively to the school's high expectations of them and they behave well in lessons and around the school.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Pupils act responsibly and have a very good understanding of how their actions affect others. They show respect for the values and beliefs of others and form very good relationships with each other and with adults.
Attendance	Satisfactory. Attendance is broadly in line with the national average. Unauthorised absences are few and most pupils arrive punctually for lessons.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

During the inspection, 22 per cent of the teaching observed was very good, and none was unsatisfactory. Eighty per cent of the teaching seen was good or better. The teaching is consistently good throughout the school, although, in the lessons seen, it was particularly strong in Years 4 and 5, where two thirds of the lessons were very good and none was less than good. Throughout the school, teaching is good because teachers have consistently high expectations of pupils and ensure that all pupils are given sufficiently demanding work to challenge and extend them. This ensures that pupils acquire knowledge, skills and understanding at a good pace, because they are interested and well motivated to learn. The quality of teaching in English and mathematics is good. Teachers have responded very positively to the need to raise standards and have implemented the national strategies for literacy and numeracy successfully. The recent emphasis on raising standards in mathematics through developing pupils' mental calculation skills is having a positive impact on pupils' learning. Teachers' lesson planning clearly identifies what pupils are to learn and makes good provision for pupils of all abilities within each class. However, there are variations in the quality of teachers' marking. Some is very constructive and shows pupils how to improve their work, whilst some is less helpful. The very good relationships that teachers have with pupils help to create a purposeful and harmonious environment for learning. As a result, pupils are motivated to apply considerable effort to their work and are able to work with concentration, interest and independence.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. The school provides an interesting and worthwhile range of learning experiences for pupils. Not only does the school have effective

	strategies for teaching literacy and numeracy, but it also places very good emphasis on providing high quality opportunities in art, music and physical education, both in lessons and as part of its very good provision of extracurricular activities. The school also makes very good provision for the pupils' personal, social and health education.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. There are good arrangements to support pupils' learning in literacy and numeracy in classes, where teaching assistants provide valuable support for individual pupils and small groups. Pupils' individual education plans are well organised and contain appropriate targets for improvement, which are reviewed regularly.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good. The very good provision for pupils' spiritual development is reflected in all aspects of the life and work of the school, and is particularly evident in acts of collective worship. The very good provision for pupils' moral and social development is reflected in their good social skills and behaviour. Good provision for cultural development enables pupils to experience and appreciate the cultural diversity of British society.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school has satisfactory procedures for health and safety, although there are some minor omissions in the administration of these. The school has very effective procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour. There are good procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress and for monitoring their academic progress and personal development.

The school works well with parents to support their children's progress. There is good communication between the school and parents, who are made to feel welcome at all times. There are some minor omissions from the school prospectus and the governors' Annual Report to parents.

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 for the school. He receives very good support from staff with management responsibilities. All work together very well as a team, and are committed to raising standards and improving the quality of education for the pupils.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors make a very good contribution to the management of the school. They have a carefully planned programme of monitoring activities which help them to develop a very good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. By working closely with the headteacher and staff, they are able to play an important part in shaping the direction of the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good. Staff and governors analyse assessment data in detail and use the information obtained to identify those areas where improvement is needed. There are rigorous procedures for monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching and learning. The headteacher is well aware of strengths and weaknesses in the pupils' performance and takes appropriate action to bring about improvement.

The strategic use of resources	Very good. The school uses its resources very efficiently to provide a good standard of education for its pupils. Expenditure is carefully linked to the priorities identified in the school improvement plan. The governors take great care to obtain the best value for money when making spending decisions.
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The school is well staffed and there is an adequate supply of resources to support the pupils' learning. The accommodation is satisfactory overall. There is no fenced play area for children in the Reception class to use and there are no large toys or climbing apparatus to promote their physical development.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school is well managed and led. • The school has high expectations of their children. • They feel comfortable approaching the school with questions or problems. • Their children enjoy school and make good progress. • The teaching is good. • The school helps their children to behave in a mature and responsible manner. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A minority of parents feels that the school does not keep them well informed about their children's progress.

The findings of the inspection agree with the positive views of the parents. They disagree with the view that parents are not kept well informed about their children's progress. The school's sound procedures include good quality end-of-year reports and opportunities each term for parents to meet their child's teacher or to attend an open evening. In addition, teachers are willing to meet with parents by arrangement to discuss their child's progress.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Overall, children enter the Foundation Stage at average levels of attainment. However, the initial assessments conducted with these children show a wide variation from year to year and children this year showed a slightly lower than average attainment for their age. The quality of teaching and the quality of learning are good and they make good progress. By the end of the Reception year, most children are on course to meet the recommendations for the end of the Foundation Stage in communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world and in their creative and physical development. In their personal, social and emotional development, they are on course to reach above average levels. In the school's previous inspection, the attainment of children under five was judged to be satisfactory, and often good, in all areas of learning. Children socialise very well and listen to the contributions of others quietly and offer their own as appropriate. They have a keen interest in stories and can listen for extended periods of time. Most children are confident and take part in discussions readily. Their listening skills in the hall are very good and they participate enthusiastically in all the activities.
2. In the end of Key Stage 1 tests in 2000, the pupils' results were above average in reading, well above average in writing and average in mathematics, when compared with all schools nationally. Compared with other similar schools, the results were average in reading and mathematics and well above average in writing. Teachers' assessments in science showed that standards were above average. Standards in writing have improved significantly since 1997, especially in the last two years, and this reflects the increased emphasis which the school placed on developing and extending pupils' writing skills. In 2000, all pupils achieved the expected level for seven year olds (Level 2) and a much higher than average proportion reached Level 3.
3. The findings of the inspection are that, in Year 2, the pupils are on course to reach the standards expected of seven year olds in reading, writing, mathematics and science. Although this indicates lower standards than the previous year, this represents good achievement for this group of pupils. In the present Year 2, 39 per cent of the pupils are on the school's register of special educational needs. Tests taken shortly after they started school show that their attainment on entry to the school was below average. The school has tracked the pupils' progress very carefully and records show that they are making good progress. The school has set realistic but challenging targets for them and is working hard to support the high number of pupils with special educational needs. Standards are average in all other subjects except music, where they are above average. In physical education, it was not possible to observe a lesson in Year 2, but standards in Year 1 are average in gymnastics. Compared with the findings of the previous inspection, standards are similar in all subjects, except in music where they are higher. There are no significant variations in attainment between boys and girls.
4. Pupils' speaking and listening skills are typical of those expected of seven year olds. They enjoy listening to and talking about stories, rhymes and poems. Some speak clearly and confidently, whilst others need support in order to be able to express their ideas. Pupils enjoy reading the shared text in the literacy hour and do so with expression. They read simple texts accurately and use appropriate strategies to read unfamiliar words, but some pupils do not always do this without prompting. Pupils in Year 2 write stories of an appropriate length, and more able pupils are beginning to choose interesting words in order to create a particular effect. Overall, pupils achieve average standards in literacy. In mathematics, pupils work out amounts of money using coins and understand the value of digits in tens and units. They know how to double and halve numbers and understand simple fractions. Pupils have a sound knowledge of two and three-dimensional shapes and can tell the time using digital and analogue clocks. They collect data and present it accurately in the form of charts and graphs. Overall, standards in numeracy are average. In science, pupils carry out simple investigations and discuss whether they are fair. They explore the effect of the friction caused by different surfaces on moving toy vehicles and make simple predictions about what might happen.

Pupils are beginning to use correct scientific vocabulary when describing their investigations. They understand that different forces, including air, make things move.

5. In information and communication technology, in Year 2, pupils have a sound knowledge of how to operate computers in order to enter, save and retrieve their work. They produce text and pictures and display simple data. Pupils demonstrate appropriate skills in controlling a programmable toy. In art, pupils attain satisfactory standards in drawing, painting and collage, but their work shows little individual flair or imagination. In design and technology, pupils make models of monsters with varying degrees of success, using syringes and plastic bottles to create movement. Although sound, their work shows that many lack original ideas and need considerable direction from the teacher. In geography, pupils show a satisfactory understanding of aspects of life in Mexico, such as climate, homes and food, whilst, in history, they demonstrate a sound knowledge of the life of Florence Nightingale and the difficult circumstances in which she worked. In music, pupils sing well, showing good control of pitch, rhythm and dynamics. They compose and perform simple tunes with increasing confidence. In physical education, pupils in Year 1 create short sequences of movements, incorporating balances on different parts of the body, and show a good awareness of how to use the space around them. In religious education, pupils offer solutions to imaginary situations in which people show jealousy and relate this to their sound understanding of the story of Joseph and his brothers.

6. In the end of Key Stage 2 national tests in 2000, the pupils' results were well above the national average in English and science, and above average in mathematics. When compared with similar schools, the results were very high in English, well above average in science and above average in mathematics. This represents very good achievement for these pupils. National data showing the pupils' progress between Year 2 and Year 6 shows that the pupils' performance was very high in English, well above average in science and above average in mathematics, when compared with schools that had similar results four years earlier. There has been a very good improvement in standards since 1997, when the pupils' results in the Key Stage 2 tests were average in English and well below average in mathematics and science. Based on the figures for the last five years, the trend of improvement in the school's performance has been significantly greater than the national trend. There is still some fluctuation from year to year, as in 1999, when standards were much lower. This is not uncommon when small numbers of pupils are involved. Another factor in this school is the significant difference between year groups in relation to the proportion of pupils with special educational needs. This was low in Year 6 in 2000, but had been high the year before. In the present Year 6, 47 per cent of the pupils are on the school's register of special educational needs, which has a significant impact on the standards achieved by the year group overall. This represents a significant rise on the previous year when 14 per cent of pupils in Year 6 were on the register. In 2000, the school comfortably exceeded its targets for the proportion of pupils who were expected to achieve Level 4 and above in the national tests. The targets for 2001, for 74 per cent of the pupils to achieve Level 4 in English and mathematics, although lower, are realistic and still challenging for this year group. The targets for more able pupils also provide a suitable degree of challenge. The school's target setting procedures are informed by its careful tracking of the progress of individual pupils and the setting of individual targets for pupils.

7. The findings of the inspection are that, in Year 6, standards are average in English, mathematics and science. They are lower than in the previous year in Year 6 because of the very high proportion of pupils with special educational needs. Standards are above average in art, music and information and communication technology. This is because teachers have high levels of expertise in these subjects and high expectations of what pupils are able to achieve. There has also been considerable emphasis on equipping the school well to ensure that all aspects of information and communication technology can be taught effectively. In all other subjects, standards in Year 6 are average for 11 year olds. Within English, standards in speaking and listening and reading are average. In writing, they are below average. Since the previous inspection in 1997, standards have improved in all subjects, except design and technology, where they remain average. The improvements in standards can be attributed directly to the much improved planning of the curriculum and the higher quality of teaching at Key Stage 2. There are no significant variations in attainment between girls and boys.

8. Pupils continue to be active and responsive listeners at Key Stage 2 and express their ideas clearly and thoughtfully. Although teachers plan opportunities for pupils to speak in more formal situations, these are not having sufficient impact on developing the pupils' vocabulary. Pupils' interest in and enjoyment of books develop well at Key Stage 2. Pupils in Year 6 read fluently and are able to evaluate texts with growing competence, but few pupils read widely from texts that really challenge them. In Year 6, pupils write in an appropriate range of forms, but there is limited evidence of more formal and structured writing. The best writing uses a good range of vocabulary and pupils use language in a lively and interesting way to create a particular effect. There is inconsistent use of basic punctuation and limited evidence of systematic planning, drafting and refining of work. Overall, standards in literacy are average for 11 year olds. In mathematics, pupils use a sound range of mental strategies to make calculations and use written methods of computation appropriately. They demonstrate a good understanding of fractions and percentages and use this to work out everyday problems involving value added tax. Pupils understand the properties of regular shapes and can work out the area of a parallelogram. They measure length, capacity and temperature accurately. In science, pupils in Year 6 carry out fair tests and repeat them at regular intervals to check differences. They understand how different forces act upon an object and use a forcemeter to determine whether an object's weight changes in water.

9. In information and communication technology, pupils have good skills in handling and communicating text and data. They combine text and graphics by scanning in pictures and are able to load their work on to the school's website. Pupils use multi-media applications and the Internet competently to find and retrieve information to support their learning across the curriculum. In art, pupils achieve good standards in drawing, and pay great attention to detail when observing people and objects. They demonstrate high levels of skill when sewing long stitch pictures and making silk paintings. In design and technology, pupils in Year 6 design and make a book of nursery rhymes with moving parts to appeal to a younger audience. They evaluate their work well and explain how it could be improved. In geography, pupils use six-figure grid references to identify features on a map and show a sound understanding of scale when working out the distance between two towns. In history, pupils use the evidence of portraits and written extracts effectively to deduce information about life in Tudor times. Pupils in Year 6 demonstrate a good understanding of the structure of music, and many are confident in reading musical notation. Pupils sing well, often in two parts, and perform on instruments as accompaniment, maintaining their own part strongly and showing good awareness of how the different parts fit together. In physical education, standards are average in gymnastics and games. They are above average in dance and swimming. In a Year 6 lesson, pupils mastered the difficult steps in three Tudor dances very well. In religious education, pupils show a sound understanding of the traditions and celebrations in the Sikh religion and compare different aspects of the Jewish and Sikh traditions.

10. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress and reach good standards for their previous attainment. These pupils do well and many attain, or come close to, national standards by the time they take the national assessment tests in Year 6. The very good relationships in the school and the good knowledge which teachers and learning support assistants have of their pupils, help pupils to feel confident and secure. Parents are very pleased with their children's rate of progress and the very caring ethos of the school. Pupils' progress is more marked in literacy and numeracy, because they receive support which is well matched to their needs and the school has effectively developed good systems for tracking pupils' progress in these core areas. Pupils from traveller backgrounds make good progress when they attend school regularly. They are supported well in lessons and are given additional help by the Local Education Authority's Traveller Support Service. Pupils who are gifted and talented make good progress and are encouraged to strive for high levels of achievement. Of particular note is the quality of singing in the school and the opportunities that are provided for pupils to perform to a very high standard in the chamber choir.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

11. Since the previous inspection, pupils' attitudes and behaviour have improved, especially at Key Stage 2. Pupils are very enthusiastic and take pride in their school. They have a very positive attitude towards their

work and this supports teaching and learning well. Throughout the school, pupils, including those with special educational needs, are keen and involved in all school activities. Pupils listen attentively, follow instructions carefully and settle quickly to the task given. They show good levels of concentration. They also work well independently and in differing group situations, sharing views and valuing others' work. In a dance lesson, boys and girls worked well together, commented positively on each other's work and suggested ways to improve. When pupils are at play and at lunchtimes, they socialise and get on well together.

12. There is a calm and caring atmosphere in the school, and all members of staff provide excellent role models for the pupils. As a result, pupils of all abilities are interested in the life of the school and behave well, complying with school and class rules. Throughout the school, children know right from wrong and are polite and courteous to all members of the staff, their peers and to visitors. Pupils form orderly queues, wait their turn and open doors for others. Behaviour in the dining hall, during assembly and while pupils move about the school, is also good. Pupils form very good relationships with each other and with adults and they show care in their support for those with special educational needs. No examples of any oppressive behaviour, bullying, sexism or racism were seen during the inspection and the great majority of pupils understand very well the impact of their behaviour on others. Resources were handled carefully and no examples of damage or graffiti were seen during the inspection. On visits to places further afield, pupils are praised for their good behaviour. In 'circle time' and religious education lessons, they discuss varied topics and express their opinions openly and accept that others may have a different view or belief from their own.

13. In lessons, pupils are encouraged to take responsibility for their own learning. Pupils in Key Stage 2 devise their own targets for the term, which are shared with the class. Older pupils are able to attend a residential week and all pupils are able to join in a wide range of extra-curricular activities. The residential week and other extra-curricular activities also enrich pupils' personal development. When given the chance to help others, they accept readily and enter into the task wholeheartedly. Pupils act as monitors, raise money for charities, help in the classroom and represent their class on the school council.

14. Children in the Reception class settle very quickly into the school routines. They have positive attitudes towards their work and play. They interact with each other and with their teacher and assistant very well indeed. All children are very friendly and their behaviour is very good. Children enjoy coming to school and take full benefit of the range of activities provided for them. Teachers encourage children to develop personal responsibility in learning and children quickly learn how to organise themselves well.

15. Pupils' attendance at school is satisfactory. It is in line with the national average, and the school has been successful in reducing the number of unauthorised absences. Few pupils are late for school, registrations at the start of sessions are efficient and, as a result, pupils settle down to work promptly and with little fuss.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

16. The quality of teaching and learning is good throughout the school. When the school was inspected in 1997, teaching was 'rarely less than satisfactory, often good or very good' in Reception and at Key Stage 1, which is broadly similar to the findings of this inspection. However, at Key Stage 2, most teaching was 'unsatisfactory or poor'. There has been a very good improvement in the quality of teaching at Key Stage 2 over the past four years. In the 1997 inspection, 39 per cent of the teaching seen was unsatisfactory. In this inspection, there was no unsatisfactory teaching. In 1997, 11 per cent of the lessons seen were very good; in this inspection, 22 per cent were very good. Overall, 80 per cent of the lessons observed during this inspection were good or better, which is a very high proportion of good teaching. There were examples of both good and very good teaching in the Foundation Stage and at Key Stages 1 and 2. The highest proportion of good and very good teaching was seen in Years 4 and 5, where all of the teaching was at least good and two thirds was very good.

17. Teachers now have consistently high expectations of pupils throughout the school and ensure that all pupils are given sufficiently demanding work to challenge and extend them. This means that pupils acquire knowledge, skills and understanding at a good pace, because they are interested and well motivated to learn. Teachers have responded very positively to the need to raise standards of attainment, and have implemented new initiatives with enthusiasm and determination. The national strategies for literacy and numeracy are being implemented successfully, and the recent emphasis on raising standards in mathematics through developing pupils' mental calculation skills is having a positive impact on pupils' learning. The improvements in curricular planning that have taken place over the past four years are reflected in the teachers' own lesson planning, which clearly identifies what pupils are to learn and makes good provision for pupils of all abilities within each class. The very good relationships that teachers have with pupils help to create a purposeful and harmonious environment for learning. In the previous inspection, a key issue for the school was to improve the marking of pupils' work in order to achieve a more consistent approach. Although this has improved to some degree, there are still variations in the quality of teacher's marking. Some is very constructive and shows pupils clearly how to improve their work, whilst some is less helpful.

18. The quality of teaching and learning for children in the Foundation Stage is very good in personal, social and emotional development and good in all other areas of learning. During the inspection, eight lessons were observed in the Reception class. Of these, seven were good and one was very good. Teaching of this quality means that all children learn at a rate appropriate to their abilities and make good progress. The Reception teacher knows the children very well as individuals and is skilled at developing warm relationships. Consequently, the children settle into school happily, and successfully develop very good attitudes to learning. The teacher's planning is good and is carefully matched to the recommended Early Learning Goals. This links appropriately to the subjects of the National Curriculum. However, planning for outdoor play is an area for development. The well-organised routines enable all children to become used to the pattern of the day and respond quickly to the high expectations for behaviour, attentiveness and following instructions. The teacher and classroom assistant in the Reception class listen with interest to what the children have to say and, when working with them, demonstrate good skills in helping children to develop their language for communication. New work is explained clearly to the children and then questions are used skilfully to assess how well the children have grasped the concept. Teachers watch the children's responses carefully and take every opportunity to extend their knowledge and understanding. The teaching of social skills is especially good, and the children enter Year 1 with a good understanding of how to behave and a growing awareness of others' needs as well as their own. A strength of the teaching in the Reception class is the very good teamwork between the teacher and classroom assistant.

19. At Key Stage 1, good teaching enables pupils to build successfully on earlier experiences and to make good progress in their learning. During this inspection, 16 lessons were observed in Years 1 and 2. Of these, one was very good, eight were good and seven were satisfactory. There was a high proportion of good teaching in Year 1. At this key stage, the quality of teaching and learning is good in English and mathematics, including literacy and numeracy, science, history, music and physical education. It is satisfactory in art, design and technology, geography, information and communication technology and religious education. Where teaching was good, pupils were given many opportunities to learn by exploration and investigation, and teachers managed them well, emphasising and praising pupils for good behaviour. In the lessons where teaching was satisfactory rather than good, sometimes the teacher's management of the pupils' behaviour was too reliant on sanctions, and sometimes, the pupils' learning was directed so much that there was insufficient opportunity for them to explore and find things out for themselves. This hindered the development of independent learning.

20. A Year 1 numeracy lesson, based on totalling coins to make different amounts, showed how the National Numeracy Strategy is being implemented successfully, and illustrated many of the best features of the teaching at this key stage. During the introductory whole class session, the teacher held up cards with number bonds on and challenged pupils to give an answer quickly. She also asked them to explain how they worked out the answer, to which one replied, "I put 14 in my head and counted on three". The teacher developed their understanding further by asking, "Why don't we put three in our head and count on 14?" By constant questioning and asking pupils to explain how they worked out answers, the teacher helped them to

become aware of a range of mental strategies. By varying the difficulty of the questions and asking different pupils, the teacher ensured that all were involved and suitably challenged. Good teaching of basic skills in addition and subtraction enabled pupils to increase their understanding and make good progress in learning number bonds. In the well-planned activities that followed, pupils used this knowledge when calculating amounts of money. A very good feature of the lesson was the variety of practical resources used by the teacher to engage pupils' interest and assist their understanding. Less able pupils worked in the class shop, buying cakes and giving the correct money, while average pupils threw special coin dice, added up the totals and 'bought' sweet cards. More able pupils found a variety of ways to make 30p and 50p, using coins, and wrote these on a sheet. The teacher kept the lesson moving at a good pace, which meant that all pupils used their time productively. The classroom assistant provided good support for the pupils in the class shop, taking part in their activity and questioning them well to develop their understanding and skill in adding small sums of money. At Key Stage 1, pupils learn well because teachers make lessons interesting and fun. For example, in a Year 2 history lesson, pupils asked previously prepared questions of 'Florence Nightingale' (their classroom assistant in costume) and were enthralled by the experience. In a Year 2 religious education lesson, the teacher used glove puppets effectively to introduce the lesson, and this engaged the pupils' interest at the outset.

21. At Key Stage 2, the quality of teaching and learning is good and pupils continue to make good progress. In 1997, the serious weaknesses in teaching at this key stage included a failure to vary work according to the ages and abilities of the pupils. Now, teachers make good provision for pupils of all ages and abilities, including those in the classes that cater for pupils in different year groups. Classroom management was another weakness four years ago, and is now a strength of the teaching. Teachers draw upon a range of strategies to manage pupils' behaviour in the classroom, most of which accentuate the positive features in the pupils' response and build on these effectively to create very good, mutually respectful relationships. In this inspection, 21 lessons were observed in Years 3 to 6. Of these, eight were very good, 11 were good and two were satisfactory. The strongest teaching occurred in Years 4 and 5 where four out of the six lessons observed were very good. The quality of teaching and learning is good in all subjects except design and technology, where it is satisfactory.

22. A very good literacy lesson for pupils in Years 4 and 5 showed how well the national strategy is being implemented. The purpose of the lesson was to revise and extend the pupils' knowledge and understanding of adjectives by comparing them on a scale of intensity. The teacher opened the lesson with a challenging activity for the whole class, in which she led pupils to re-arrange a list of adjectives, including hot, warm, tepid, lukewarm, chilly and cold, in order of intensity. This was developed very well into a discussion of comparative and superlative adjectives, and the different ways of making these, by using suffixes and words such as 'more' or 'most'. The teacher's infectious enthusiasm motivated the pupils and sustained their interest, with the result that they enjoyed the lesson and were engrossed in the subsequent group activities. These were well matched to the needs of different pupils and presented a very good level of challenge. Pupils made good use of computers, thesauri and a range of written resources to support their learning, and the classroom assistant provided valuable support for pupils with special educational needs.

23. As at Key Stage 1, teachers use a variety of methods and resources to make lessons interesting for pupils and to sustain their concentration. For example, in a Year 3 religious education lesson, pupils who were learning about the significance of the different foods on the Seder plate at the Jewish festival of Passover were able to handle the plate and sample some food. The pupils were able to explain well the significance of each of the foods on the Seder plate and related them to the story of the Passover, which showed that the teacher had given them very clear information in a way that had enabled them to remember and recount the main points. The lesson provided further evidence of the way teachers use information and communication technology to good effect to support learning, as one pupil's task was to gain access to a website and find information about the Passover. A very good dance lesson for pupils in Years 5 and 6 showed how teachers have high expectations of pupils and, through very good management and relationships, create very positive attitudes towards learning. The pupils performed Tudor dances, and related this well to their knowledge and understanding of the period, as the teacher's questions helped them to appreciate the

reasons for dancing and the constraints of costume. The teacher's very good management skills ensured that both boys and girls participated in the lesson with enjoyment and without embarrassment.

24. The quality of teaching for pupils with special educational needs is good and results in these pupils making good progress. Teachers and learning support assistants plan effectively together to ensure that lesson activities match the targets on pupils' individual education plans. Targets are clearly expressed and provide realistic stages of development. As a result, pupils make good progress, both in their grasp of basic skills, and in their confidence and positive attitudes to work. In most numeracy and literacy lessons, learning support assistants provide good support in whole class sessions, in small group work and work with individual pupils. In the whole class sessions, they observe selected pupils and make helpful notes for the class teachers, which are followed up in subsequent lessons. This is a productive use of their time and makes a good contribution to the school's monitoring of individual pupils' progress. Not all literacy and numeracy lessons have learning support assistants present and some pupils' progress is less marked in these sessions. The school has already recognised the need for additional support in these lessons and has planned to address the situation.

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

25. Overall, the quality and range of the curriculum provided by the school are good and promote the aims of the school well. It includes all subjects of the National Curriculum, together with religious education. The curriculum meets all statutory requirements and offers pupils a good range of opportunities. Appropriate policies and schemes of work are in place for all subjects, and each receives an appropriate amount of teaching time. This shows a good improvement since the previous inspection, when a key issue was to "ensure that curricular planning at Key Stage 2 meets all requirements of the National Curriculum". Long-term and medium-term planning is good and provides for the coverage of all National Curriculum programmes of study. Weekly plans are detailed and focus on key objectives, which groups of pupils are to learn. The headteacher and subject co-ordinators monitor planning of the curriculum. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been successfully implemented. They have been appropriately resourced and are having a good impact on helping to raise standards throughout the school. Provision for pupils' personal development is very good. Health and sex education and the use and misuse of medicines and drugs are taught as part of personal, social and health education and through the science curriculum, within the context of caring relationships. Pupils are provided with accurate information, which promotes positive attitudes to a healthy lifestyle. The provision for homework is satisfactory across the school and is appropriate to pupils' ages.

26. The quality and range of learning opportunities for children in the Foundation Stage are good. The curriculum provided takes full account of the recommended areas of learning. Planning is thorough and detailed for each area of learning and well linked to appropriate topics, such as 'Toys' and 'Ourselves'. A strong emphasis is placed on providing first-hand experiences of quality. There is very good provision for personal and social development. This is a strength in the Reception class, which prepares children well for entry into Year 1. More focused teaching, linked to literacy and numeracy, is carefully planned for and introduced effectively to the children. Although the facilities do not extend to an outdoor play area, the Reception teacher provides indoor activities that offer appropriate physical challenges.

27. Curricular provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. There are good arrangements to support pupils' learning in literacy and numeracy in classes, where teaching assistants work with individual pupils or with small groups. The Additional Literacy Support Programme is providing an effective strategy for pupils in Year 3 to develop their understanding of phonics. Individual education plans are well organised and targets are clear and achievable. These targets focus on both literacy and numeracy, and most education plans also include targets for personal and social development. The school has recently introduced 'group education plans' for pupils who have similar literacy or numeracy targets. Indications are that these are providing very focused support and effective monitoring, which is having a positive effect on pupils'

achievement. The needs of the pupil with a statement of special educational need are well met and annual reviews provide a good focus for further improvement. Traveller children also receive good support from the school and two are supported by Traveller Support Services.

28. The aims of the school show a strong commitment to equality of education for all pupils and this is reflected well in all aspects of school life. The school compares how well boys and girls perform in different subjects, and has done much to raise boys' self-esteem through providing appropriate reading material and encouraging them to join the choir and take part in performances. Good provision for pupils with special educational needs and those from traveller backgrounds ensures that they have appropriate access to all aspects of the curriculum and extra-curricular activities.

29. The school provides a very good range of extra-curricular activities. Pupils are able to participate in clubs during the lunch hour and after school, where boys and girls can learn to play the recorder, sing in the choirs, play football and netball, use computers, play Kwik Cricket, learn French and find out more about the environment. Pupils are able to take part in various sporting activities with other schools, where they are often successful. The football team has won three out of its four matches this season. Parents and governors are also closely involved, especially with coaching for football, and a visiting instructor of the national Under 18 hockey team provides coaching in some lessons. The curriculum is enhanced through a very good range of visits and visitors. Pupils visit different local places of interest, such as Golden Stable Wood Farm and the Stag Theatre, which all enhance pupils' learning in many areas of the curriculum. Older pupils take part in a residential visit. Visiting theatre companies and musicians enliven pupils' understanding of historical events and different cultures.

30. There are good links with the local community that make a positive contribution to pupils' experience and learning. Local visitors are welcomed into the school and to assemblies. Older residents from the village attend an annual Christmas dinner in the school hall, at which pupils from Year 6 serve food and help to clear away. The school choirs perform in local residential homes and at the church. The school has good links with the playgroup, which shares the same site, and the local secondary school. These good links help to prepare pupils well for their transfer to their next stage of education. There are good links with outside agencies for pupils with special educational needs. Members of the local community are lending their support to the school's 'Millennium Project', which is sponsored by a local building firm. This aims to enhance the school grounds and the pupils' environmental education by creating an area for the study of bog, grass and pond habitats, with a fully resourced environmental workroom, a chalkland walk and tree trail, a children's garden and a woodland seating area.

31. The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good overall. Pupils' spiritual development is very good. It is enhanced through religious education, where they learn about world religions, and in very good assemblies. Here, pupils enter reverently to an atmosphere of calm created by well-chosen music. The focus is mainly Christian and pupils sing hymns well, take part in prayers and have time for real reflection. The 'Achievement Assemblies' create a sense of occasion and there is a real joy in the school. Pupils are encouraged to develop an appreciation of, and to wonder at, the natural world during science and art lessons. They experience the pleasure of making music to a very high standard, and of responding to moving choral music in assembly.

32. The very good provision for pupils' moral development is founded on the very high expectations that staff have of them. All staff provide very good role models for the pupils and are very consistent in the way they show respect for both pupils and other adults. The school has a very positive approach to the management of behaviour. Rewards, such as the collection of credits and the high profile presentations in 'Achievement Assemblies', accompanied by the headteacher's praise, are successful in building pupils' self-esteem and respect for others. Staff make pupils aware of what is acceptable and help them to develop an appropriate idea of what is right and wrong. Moral issues are taught well and pupils are well behaved in and around the school. Pupils discuss and decide on their own class rules, which are displayed in the classrooms and which

they adhere to very well. Through their sporting activities, pupils are developing a healthy sense of competition, an awareness of rules and pride in their team's achievements.

33. The school makes very good provision for pupils' social development. The school creates a strong sense of identity as a very caring community in which everyone is respected and supported very well. Pupils are democratically elected and are proud to represent their class as members of the school council, where they propose and discuss a wide variety of issues. They decide on which charities the school will support and, last year, decided on the contents of the Millennium capsule. They care for the environment and are helping to plan the Millennium Garden. Local dignitaries support the school well and people who help are regular visitors. The choir entertains local elderly residents and some of the elderly residents come into school to speak about their lives, thus enhancing and extending pupils' knowledge of the history of the local community.

34. There is good provision for pupils' cultural development. This shows that the school has worked hard to address the previous key issue to "plan pupils' cultural development to ensure that they are more aware of horizons beyond the village community". Although the school rightly values its place in the village community, it now draws on examples from many cultural traditions and helps pupils to appreciate the ethnic and cultural diversity of British life. The quality of art and music is high in the school and these subjects enhance pupils' cultural awareness and knowledge. There are opportunities through the curriculum to learn of the cultural and faith traditions of Britain's multicultural population. In one class, pupils have made Chinese lanterns for Chinese New Year and in another class, they experienced a Passover meal. There are still some areas in which the range of resources does not fully reflect cultural diversity, such as in the Foundation Stage and examples of the work of a wide range of artists.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

35. The school continues to provide satisfactory care for its pupils. The environment is safe and members of staff care for pupils well. The quality of information kept on each pupil is detailed and comprehensive, and members of staff know pupils and their medical and personal needs very well. The school identifies and deals effectively with any hazards found on site, and health and safety inspections are regularly undertaken. The school governors have designed and implemented a detailed health and safety policy and the school is a safe environment. There are a small number of administrative items that require improvement in this area, of which the school has been informed. There are satisfactory arrangements for first aid. Two people are trained to administer first aid, and first aid kits are distributed throughout the school. However, there is no designated room in the school for the treatment and care of pupils.

36. The school's policy and procedures follow the guidelines of the local committee for the protection of children. The headteacher is the designated person responsible for child protection and other members of staff understand well the school's arrangements and procedures. This aspect has been improved since the last inspection.

37. The school is very good at monitoring and eliminating oppressive behaviour and the school is very aware of any groups of children that might be at risk. Parents and pupils confirm that the children feel safe in the school. Parents also confirm that there are few incidents of bullying or racism and members of the school staff deal with them speedily and sensitively when they arise.

38. Children in the Foundation Stage are very well cared for and it is evident that they feel at ease in their surroundings. Assessment and record keeping procedures are good. On-going observations of the children at work and play, within each area of learning, are well established. Consequently the teacher has a good overview of the progress made by individual children in their personal development.

39. The care and support of pupils with special educational needs are good. Teachers and learning support assistants know the pupils they work with well. The supportive, caring ethos of the school and its respect for the value of all individuals ensure that pupils with educational needs have good opportunities to take part in all

school activities. Their contributions are recognised and fully appreciated. There are good procedures for identifying pupils with special educational needs. Pupils' needs are quickly identified when they enter the school. Through the school's good procedures for tracking pupil's progress and well organised individual education plans, effective arrangements are made for the regular review of their progress. Pupils' records are well maintained and organised and provide a clear picture of pupils' progress. The school has productive and regular liaison with outside agencies, which are involved, as appropriate, in pupils' termly and annual reviews.

40. The school has been successful in maintaining pupils' punctuality and attendance and has reduced the number of unauthorised absences. It complies with statutory requirements for registration, coding and recording attendance. Procedures for analysing, monitoring and following up absences are good and the educational welfare service supports the school in this area. Attendance records are regularly examined to identify patterns of absence and any noticeable trends among particular groups of pupils. Children who have been absent for lengthy periods are welcomed back to school sensitively by staff and pupils alike.

41. Arrangements for monitoring and promoting good behaviour have been formalised since the last inspection and are very good. Rewards and sanctions are applied consistently by all staff. Pupils devise their own class rules and are well aware of school rules. At lunch and break times, any instances of poor behaviour are recorded and staff apply imaginative and consistent strategies to diffuse any disagreements between pupils. The class that shows the best behaviour each week is presented with a cup.

42. There are good procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development. This is an improvement since the previous inspection when it was identified as a weakness. The teachers' detailed knowledge of pupils' needs and the school's provision for personal, social and health education make a good contribution to this aspect. Staff encourage pupils to be responsible for their own well being and health and safety through discussion. Pupils participate in 'circle time', when they discuss a wide variety of issues, and are given opportunities to take responsibility and to use their initiative. Pupils' personal development is also supported through setting their own targets for improvement after discussion with teachers.

43. Since the last inspection, there has been very good improvement in the procedures for assessment and the analysis of data. Very soon after children enter the school in the Reception class, they are assessed using the Local Education Authority's procedures designed for this age range of children. This information is used to predict the levels that individual pupils are likely to achieve in the end of Key Stage 1 national tests. At the end of their first year in school, the assessment procedure is repeated, to check the children's progress. In the intervening period between the national tests in Years 2 and 6, the school uses optional tests for Years 3, 4 and 5, similar to those at the end of Key Stage 2. Reading, spelling and mathematics tests are administered regularly. The results of all these tests are monitored carefully and used to set targets for future learning and to forecast the level pupils are expected to achieve the following year. The school's targets for each year group are constructed from these individual pupils' targets. In addition, teachers track the progress of individual pupils in English and mathematics. The data collected is analysed carefully to provide the school with much useful information. For example, it enabled the school to identify areas of weakness in mathematics which have since been addressed. To assist staff in tracking each individual pupil's progress, all relevant information, such as test results, National Curriculum Records of Achievement and record sheets for literacy, mathematics and science, are passed to the next teacher. Teachers have also met to examine samples of pupils' work, in order to determine and agree on the levels attained in English, mathematics and science. All pupils are involved in setting their own targets in English and mathematics.

44. The school is now beginning to apply the good assessment procedures that are currently used in science to the other subjects. Although this development is at an early stage, the school's approach is beginning to provide a systematic method that is closely related to the content of the schemes of work for each subject. However, many of these procedures are new to the school and have yet to be monitored for success.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

45. Parents have a very positive view of the school, which is an improvement since the last inspection. The school works well with parents. They are made to feel welcome, are able to discuss issues or concerns, and contribute to and support the school in a variety of ways. Parents also confirm that the school's 'open door' policy works well.

46. The impact of the parents' involvement on the work of the school is good. Parents support the school and contribute well to their children's learning at home. They are satisfied with the work their children are given to do at home and help to ensure that this is completed. The parent teacher association raises large sums of money to purchase materials and resources for the school, and parents organise social events and assist with extra-curricular activities. They attend assemblies, performances, social and curricular events, briefing meetings and parents' evenings. Parents were seen helping in school during the inspection and are encouraged to play a full and active part in the life of the school.

47. The information provided for parents is good. They receive information on work that can be done at home, newsletters, day-to-day class and school information and end-of-year reports on their children's progress. Details of the curriculum to be taught are available in school and parents have attended curriculum evenings on numeracy and literacy initiatives. The school's documentation for parents is informative and fulfils most statutory requirements, other than the governors' Annual Report to parents and the school's prospectus. These do not satisfy all legal requirements. The school has recently canvassed parents with a questionnaire and the responses were positive. There are good arrangements for involving the parents of pupils with special educational needs in reviews of their children's progress.

48. Before the inspection, a significant minority of parents in their questionnaire responses felt that they were not well informed about their children's progress. The inspectors' findings are that parents are well informed. Pupils' annual reports are detailed; they describe what children have achieved and include information on how pupils can improve. Parents are also able to discuss their children's progress at consultation evenings twice a year, and are able to view pupils' work in the classroom on open days. The headteacher and staff are always willing to discuss any parents' concerns, and this is confirmed by most parents. They say that the school responds positively to any suggestions or complaints. Parents have confidence in the school, the head teacher and staff and are very pleased with the school's improvement since the last inspection.

49. Induction procedures for children who are starting school are satisfactory. Parents are invited to meet with the Reception teacher, headteacher and chair of governors, where they have the opportunity to hear about the learning their child will experience and receive the school's documentation. The children have two sample mornings in school during the term before they are admitted to the Reception class. Parents receive a half-termly overview of the curriculum that covers the areas of learning and a written report of their child's progress and achievement at the end of their year in Reception. There is no booklet specific to the school to inform parents of the way children are catered for and taught in the Foundation Stage.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

50. The school's leadership and management are very good. This is a significant improvement since the school was first inspected in 1997, when leadership and management were described as 'weak at the highest level' and the school lacked clear educational direction. The headteacher, who was appointed in January 1998, provides very clear direction for the work and development of the school. He is very well supported by other staff with management responsibilities and by the governors. All work closely together as a highly effective team. The quality and effectiveness of the school's leadership and management are directly responsible for the very good improvement that has taken place since the school was made subject to special measures four years ago. After the resignation of the previous headteacher and deputy head, a temporary head and deputy began the process of improvement, which accelerated under the present headteacher and resulted in the school being removed from special measures in July 1998. The headteacher's determined but sensitive leadership has been very effective in raising the morale of the staff and improving the reputation of the school in the local community.

51. The key issues for action from previous inspections have been addressed thoroughly and methodically. There have been significant improvements in the pupils' results in the national tests for seven and 11 year olds. These fluctuate from year to year because of the small numbers of pupils involved and because, in some year groups, there is a far higher proportion of pupils with special educational needs than in others. However, even allowing for this, the trend of improvement over the past five years is greater than that seen in most schools. Standards have improved because the quality of teaching is significantly better than it was four years ago, especially at Key Stage 2, where most was unsatisfactory or poor. Four years ago, only 61 per cent of the teaching was satisfactory or better; in this inspection, all of the teaching was at least satisfactory and 80 per cent was at least good. The percentage of very good teaching has doubled to 22 per cent. The effective implementation of the national strategies for literacy and numeracy has been a key factor in raising standards in English and mathematics. Another is the very good improvement that has been made in planning and teaching the curriculum, which, four years ago, failed to meet the requirements of the National Curriculum in six of the ten subjects. An accelerated programme of curricular development brought about effective change very quickly, and this has ensured that all pupils now receive a good, all-round education.

52. In 1997, a failure to delegate responsibilities appropriately was a key factor in the school's poor leadership and management. The headteacher has delegated responsibilities for subjects very well and has enabled teachers to develop their role as co-ordinators very effectively. This is particularly evident in English, mathematics and science, where the co-ordinators play a vital role in monitoring and developing the curriculum, analysing how well pupils are doing and observing and providing support for colleagues. Although the role of co-ordinators in other subjects has mainly been limited to developing policies and schemes of work and providing informal support for colleagues, the focus is now shifting on to those subjects that have not yet been monitored closely. The school has a well-planned timetable of development, which shows when each subject will be the focus for monitoring during the year. Co-ordinators are scheduled to observe lessons and sample pupils' work throughout the school, along with the headteacher. In those subjects where this has already happened, the co-ordinator and headteacher observe classes and then meet to discuss the strengths and weaknesses of teaching in the subject. They prepare individual written reports for teachers and identify whole school issues that arise to discuss with all staff and governors. Each teacher has one or two targets for future development as a result of the monitoring, which are discussed, agreed and reviewed the following term. The rigorous monitoring and evaluation of teaching contribute very well to the school's continuing improvement.

53. The governors make a very good contribution to the management of the school. This is also a significant improvement since the previous inspection. The governors work closely with the headteacher and are very supportive of the staff and appreciative of their efforts. The role of the governors has increased in effectiveness as they have become more involved in monitoring the standards achieved by the pupils and the quality of education provided by the school. They do this through discussions at meetings of their well-structured committees and the full governing body, and by meeting with the headteacher and staff to gain information about particular aspects of the school's provision. Governors monitor the school improvement plan termly by means of report from the headteacher, which is discussed in depth by the curriculum committee. They ask searching questions and seek explanations for decisions that are made. They visit the school regularly to observe lessons and discuss what they have seen with the headteacher and co-ordinators. These visits are well planned and a clear focus is agreed in advance. As a result of their greatly improved involvement in the school, the governors now have a very clear picture of what the school does well and where it still needs to improve. They fulfil their statutory responsibilities very well.

54. The senior management team and governors are committed to monitoring and evaluating the school's performance by comparing it with other similar schools and with schools nationally. They have a very good range of procedures for analysing the results of both national and internal tests, which enable them to identify aspects that require further improvement. For example, a careful analysis of assessment information has led to a greater emphasis on teaching strategies for mental calculation in mathematics, which is already having a positive effect on pupils' attainment. Concerns about the attainment of boys in reading led to the provision of a wider range of books that appealed to boys. Careful tracking of the progress made by individual pupils also leads to intervention where necessary, and ensures that weaknesses are addressed at an early stage.

55. In 1997, planning for school development was poor and lacked clear priorities. There has been a very good improvement in this aspect of the leadership and management of the school. The headteacher has established very efficient and effective procedures for identifying priorities for development and all staff and governors are productively involved in the process. The number of priorities in the school improvement plan is manageable and all planned actions are linked closely to raising the standards achieved by the pupils. Progress towards achieving the goals that have been set is monitored closely by the governors and senior management team throughout the year. There is also flexibility in the process that allows the school to modify its plans in the light of termly monitoring. This ensures that the school improvement plan is a very useful tool that drives the development of the school.

56. There has also been a very good improvement in the efficiency of the school since 1997, at which time the school had a financial deficit and spending decisions were not related appropriately to the school development plan. The school's budget was used inefficiently and it did not give satisfactory value for money. Through very good financial planning and careful monitoring of expenditure, the deficit was cleared and the school now has appropriate financial reserves of around four per cent of its total budget. Efficient administrative procedures and very thorough checking by the governors' finance committee ensure that the resources that are allocated to the school are used very well to provide a good quality of education for the pupils. There are very clear links between the budget and the priorities identified in the school improvement plan and governors monitor the impact of spending decisions on the standards achieved by the pupils. Spending decisions are carefully related to obtaining best value for money. Parents' views are sought through questionnaires and pupils' views through the school council. A number of different possibilities are considered and estimates sought before committing to major expenditure. One of the most significant improvements has been in the school's provision for and use of information and communication technology. Well-targeted expenditure has resulted in greatly improved facilities for teaching the subject and much better standards of attainment. This is another example of the effective involvement of the governors in all aspects of the school. One governor has assumed responsibility for the subject and works very closely with the headteacher to oversee development and monitor progress.

57. The match of teachers to the needs of the curriculum is good. The teachers are well motivated and work together as a strong team. Support staff in the school are enthusiastic and work well with teaching staff. This contributes significantly to the quality of teaching and learning, particularly to the teaching and learning of pupils with special educational needs. However, the number of support staff is not sufficient to provide support in all literacy sessions. The school has already begun the process of improving this situation. The school has a good number of teachers and most are well qualified for their roles. The two unqualified teachers are receiving very good support from the school and one of these teachers is following the Registered Teachers' Training Programme.

58. The coordination of special educational needs is carried out effectively and efficiently. Good use is made of the expertise of the headteacher and deputy headteacher to lead and co-ordinate the provision for pupils with special educational needs. The co-ordinators track pupils' progress carefully and maintain well organised records of all liaison with agencies outside the school. The school has good arrangements for liaison with the local secondary schools. The co-ordinator meets teachers there to discuss any aspects of pupils' educational needs and pupils visit the school before they transfer. The school fully meets the requirements of the Code of Practice for special educational needs. There is a designated governor, who has a good involvement in the life of the school. Funds allocated for pupils with special educational needs are used to good effect and the school makes a significant contribution from its own resources.

59. The management of the provision for children in the Foundation Stage is good. The teacher responsible for the early years is the Reception teacher who, consequently, has a very clear overview of provision for the children. The quality of relationships within the Reception class is very good. The indoor accommodation is bright, spacious and well organised. However, there is no designated outdoor area for free play or the appropriate resources for children to use outdoors. The school has identified this as an aspect for development. Learning resources are generally good to support the children's learning indoors, but there are limited resources that help to develop children's knowledge of different cultures.

60. Subject coordinators are well suited to their roles. This is an improvement since the last inspection, when arrangements hindered continuity of learning. A specialist music teacher provides expert tuition for pupils both in lessons and in the very good extracurricular opportunities. The training programme is linked well to the school's improvement plan and appraisal arrangements are in place for all staff. New members of staff are supported very well by established members of the team and are monitored appropriately. Learning support assistants are well qualified and are encouraged to take part in all relevant school training and in additional support programmes.

61. The school's accommodation for pupils in Key Stages 1 and 2, the hall and offices is satisfactory. This is an improvement since the last inspection when the local education authority had identified some serious concerns regarding the state of the windows. Classrooms and the hall are of a good size and provide appropriate space for all activities of the curriculum. Good use is made of additional areas to provide a support room for small group and individual work. However although the buildings are well maintained and all areas are kept bright and clean by hard working and competent staff, the fabric of the ceilings in some classrooms detracts from the quality of the learning environment. The school hall is let out to several village organisations outside school hours. There are no first aid or welfare rooms for pupils who are not feeling well. The junior library space is too small to allow for easy access by groups or classes to develop their information retrieval skills. The school has an attractive and spacious grassed area and an appropriate hard surfaced space. The wildlife area provides good opportunities for pupils' work in science. The school has plans in place to develop the area further as part of its 'Millennium project'. There is no fenced outside play area or outdoor equipment for children in the Reception class

62. Resources are satisfactory in all subjects and there are good resources for literacy. The school makes good use of loans services to enhance the school's own resources in history, religious education and geography. Although the school has a good range of untuned percussion instruments, the range of tuned instruments is more limited. In the school's last inspection, there were insufficient computers and software to enable pupils to have appropriate time to develop their skills. This situation has now improved and there is a satisfactory number of networked computers to cover the needs of the curriculum.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

63. In order to continue to improve the quality of education provided by the school the governors, headteacher and staff should:

1. Raise the standards of the content and style of pupils' writing at Key Stage 2* by:

- improving the pupils' ability to use punctuation accurately;
- providing more opportunities for pupils to write in a more formal style, such as presenting an argument or point of view;
- ensuring that the pupils develop their writing skills more fully in all subjects of the curriculum;
- improving the pupils' ability to draft and redraft their work in order to make it better.

(Paragraphs 7, 8, 77, 81-84, 87, 114, 130)

OTHER ISSUES WHICH SHOULD BE CONSIDERED BY THE SCHOOL

- ensuring that the procedures for marking and responding to pupils' work are applied consistently by all teachers, with particular emphasis on showing pupils how they can improve;

(Paragraphs 17, 87, 114)

- providing a fenced outdoor play area and appropriate equipment for children in the Reception class;

(Paragraphs 26, 59, 61, 74, 76)

- making sure that the minor omissions in the statutory information to parents and in the administration of the school's procedures for health and safety are rectified.

(Paragraphs 35, 47)

Items marked * are identified in the school development plan

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	45
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	31

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	22	58	20	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	150
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	23

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	53

English as an additional language

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	4
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	5

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.4
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.1
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2000	7	13	20

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	*		
	Girls			
	Total	18	20	20
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	90 (89)	100 (93)	100 (93)
	National	[84] (82)	[85] (83)	[90] (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys			
	Girls			
	Total	20	20	19
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	100 (89)	100 (86)	95 (96)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

* Omitted as fewer than 10 boys involved in tests

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	2000	9	12	21

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	*		
	Girls			
	Total	19	18	17
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	90 (60)	86 (60)	81 (75)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys			
	Girls			
	Total	16	18	20
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	80 (55)	86 (65)	95 (75)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	80 (75)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	2
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	126
Any other minority ethnic group	1

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	6.6
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22
Average class size	21

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	80

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Financial information

Financial year	1999/00
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	£
Total income	311321
Total expenditure	306270
Expenditure per pupil	2070
Balance brought forward from previous year	4387
Balance carried forward to next year	9438

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	140
Number of questionnaires returned	85

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	59	40	0	1	0
My child is making good progress in school.	50	45	2	1	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	36	57	1	0	6
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	33	62	4	1	0
The teaching is good.	54	44	0	0	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	40	42	13	5	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	65	32	1	1	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	64	36	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	33	55	8	2	2
The school is well led and managed.	68	31	0	0	1
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	53	45	0	0	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	49	38	8	5	0

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

64. The school has maintained the good provision for children in the Foundation Stage since the previous inspection. The well-organised day-to-day routines established by the Reception teacher enable all children to feel secure and safe and to grow in confidence. The good teaching is having a positive impact on children's learning.

65. Children are admitted to school during the year in which they become five, either part-time or full time, depending on when their fifth birthday occurs. Most children have attended the pre-school group attached to the school. Overall, when children enter the school, their attainment is broadly average for their age. However, the initial assessments conducted with these children show a wide variation from year to year, and children this year showed a slightly lower than average attainment for their age. Judgements relating to standards at this time of year also take into account the work completed by children who are now in Year 1. By the end of the Reception year, most children are achieving well and are on course to meet the Early Learning Goals in communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world and in their creative and physical development. This is due to the good teaching and learning in these areas of development. In their personal, social and emotional development, the quality of teaching and learning is very good and most children exceed the Early Learning Goals.

Personal, social and emotional development

66. Standards are above average in this area of learning. Most children are on course to exceed the Early Learning Goals in this area by the time they leave the Reception class. This shows good achievement and reflects the skilful teaching, where children are constantly encouraged to feel confident about what they can achieve. The children settle in very well, and quickly learn to share and take turns while at play or work. They listen carefully to others, both in the classroom and during school assemblies, when they are very well behaved and try their best to join in with the hymns and prayers. During whole class sessions, children sit quietly, remember to take turns when speaking, and learn to consider the viewpoint of others. For example, when talking about their weekend experiences, the children listen to one another's contributions with interest and are sufficiently confident to ask their own questions. They are extremely polite, and at all times remember to use conventional phrases, such as 'please' and 'thank you', when asking for or receiving anything that is handed to them. The children attend to their personal hygiene appropriately, and most of them undress and dress themselves independently before and after drama and music and movement lessons. The children enjoy learning. For example, when participating in drama and music, they show great pleasure in participating and in what they achieve. All children settle quickly to the more structured activities, such as literacy and numeracy, and show ability to concentrate for appropriate periods of time.

67. Personal and social development is strongly promoted in all areas of learning and the planning is thorough. A strength of the teaching is the warm and encouraging relationships that the adults develop with the children, which enable them to feel secure and to grow in confidence. The adults provide very good role models for the children, always treating each other and the children with courtesy and respect. This leads to trusting relationships and helps the children to develop an awareness of others. The Reception teacher ensures that there is sufficient time for the children to choose activities for themselves and to initiate their own ideas through play. There is, in general, a good range of resources to support this aspect of their learning. However, there are few to provide children with the opportunity to experience differences in cultures other than their own.

Communication, language and literacy

68. Children make good progress in this area of learning, and, by the time they have completed the Reception year, most are on course to meet the recommended Early Learning Goals. Their language and communication skills develop well, and most children talk freely about their own experiences and the things that interest them. All adults use talk to good effect and are good active listeners. Throughout all the areas of learning, both the Reception teacher and classroom assistant talk to the children individually and in groups to ensure that all children extend their vocabulary and have the ability to use their language and communication skills for a range of purposes. All adults show children that they value their efforts at communicating. The children sustain attentive listening and particularly enjoy listening to stories. Children know that print carries meaning and point to the words in books as they are read. They make relevant observations about the characters in pictures such as, 'he looks happy in that picture', and know that speech bubbles are what the characters in books are saying. Consistent strategies used by the teacher and classroom assistant enable pupils to recognise and say the initial sounds of words. The more able children are beginning to recognise familiar words and use their knowledge of sounds to help them read simple regular words, such as 'man' and 'pan'. They confidently 'have a go' at writing and, by the time they leave the Reception class, many children write independently for an appropriate range of purposes.

69. The Reception teacher has effectively adapted the National Literacy Strategy framework to meet the needs of all children in the class. A good programme of teaching, based on the meaning of words, spelling patterns, sentence construction and reading texts together helps to develop the children's knowledge and understanding using well-known stories and rhymes. Children are provided with a good range of purposeful activities to develop their use of language for reading and writing, whatever their stage of development. For example, they are provided with paper and pencils when acting out the role of drivers on a rubbish lorry and write a list to show the order of drivers. Drama is used well to foster children's enjoyment of the spoken and written word. For example, after reading *We're going on a Bear Hunt*, the teacher effectively used the story to capture the children's imagination by acting out the experiences of going on the bear hunt. Through effective interaction with adults and realistically high expectations of the quality of work that can be achieved, all children extend their communication, language and literacy skills well.

Mathematical development

70. This area of learning is well taught and, by the end of the Reception year, most children are on course to meet the Early Learning Goals for mathematics. Children can mostly count up to ten and record it with the correct number of pictures. They copy-write numbers and, by the end of the Reception year, many are beginning to record numbers unaided. Most children develop a sound understanding of mathematical language and use words such as before, after, bigger than and smaller than, when talking about numbers. More able children use their developing mathematical ideas to solve problems, such as one more, two more or three more than a number from one to ten. In their early work, children are provided with an appropriate range of practical experiences, such as sorting and ordering games, shape puzzles, building with bricks and using coins. The more formal activities for mathematics are effectively introduced to the children through the framework for teaching numeracy. Many children are able to recognise and name a triangle, circle and square and show an awareness of measurement, for example, by finding out which teddy is the heaviest or lightest.

71. The work is well planned and children are encouraged to see mathematics all around them and develop their mathematical ideas through play situations, singing rhymes and at the end of lessons when lining up. Questions are used skilfully to encourage children to organise their thoughts and build on their understanding. For example, after introducing children to ordinal numbers in a numeracy lesson, the teacher made very good use of teddies on a washing line to develop their understanding. By asking questions such as, 'Can you put the first and last teddy in the right place?' and 'What does the fifth teddy look like?' the children developed an understanding of the idea. When working on group activities, they demonstrated their knowledge by confidently ordering the 'play people' and animals. Both the teacher and classroom assistant encourage the children to become mathematicians by using their growing understanding to solve problems.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

72. Children enter the Reception class with a basic general knowledge, which the teacher builds on effectively, helping them to learn more about the world around them. The teaching and learning are good and most children are on course to meet the expected standard by the end of the Reception year. Activities are very well planned and organised and are carefully linked between the recommended areas of learning and the National Curriculum subjects. Taking themes such as 'Toys' and 'Ourselves', teachers plan activities well to enable children to explore aspects of the environment and to relate the work to their own experiences. Discussion forms an important part of the work, and children are encouraged to be observant and describe what they see. Effective questioning focuses children's attention and probes their understanding. For example, in a lesson on finding out about past and present events, the teacher skilfully used a large picture of a Victorian street scene to reinforce pupils' learning. By asking questions such as, 'How are the vehicles different?' and 'Have they got engines? How do they move?' she prompted pupils to observe carefully and express their ideas. The children talked about some ways in which they were different, such as 'They've got no roofs on' and 'Horses pull them'. The teacher developed the theme well by showing children a very old wooden Noah's Ark toy and a modern plastic one, and asking them to describe how they are different. 'This one is dirty and that one is all bright and sparkly,' replied one child. In work related to scientific enquiry, the children use their senses to explore what they can see and what they like to hear. They draw pictures of living things, sources of light and toys that can be moved by pushing or pulling.

73. The teacher makes effective use of walks around the school grounds and stories, such as *Dinosaurs and all that Rubbish*, to introduce children to the idea of how the environment can be made unattractive by people. A visit to see the re-cycling bins enabled children to learn that the refuse collectors are there to help us. A wide range of construction toys and materials are provided for the children to explore and use their skills to make models. Their skills in design and technology are well developed, as seen in the cog and wheel roundabout on display and in the moving vehicles they make from re-cycled materials. The children make good progress when using the computer and demonstrate well-developed skills in their control of the mouse when moving items on the screen to 'Dress the Teddy'. The children have a good attention span, and both the teacher and classroom assistant provide effective support as they work and ensure that all children are involved. Although the children are introduced to a suitable range of religions and beliefs through literacy and religious education lessons, there are very few role-play resources that reflect a variety of different cultures.

Physical development

74. Children are making sound progress in developing physical control, mobility and awareness of space indoors. However, there is no designated outdoor area for the children or large wheeled toys and clambering equipment for the children to use, enjoy and refine their skills. The children join the older children in the playground at break times and have regular opportunities to use the hall for physical education, music and movement lessons and drama activities. In these lessons, the children make good use of the space in the hall and develop an awareness of others. Good learning in these lessons is due to the teacher's good use of time and the imaginative approach that keeps all children involved and active. For example, in the movement lesson, children imagined they were toys in a toy box and when they came out of the box moved as toy soldiers, floppy dolls and wind-up rabbits. They showed appropriate skills for their age, and used movements such as creeping, marching, hopping and jumping high and low. Afterwards they noticed that their hearts were beating faster.

75. Within the classroom, children develop increasing hand control through cutting, gluing and by practising their handwriting. The children competently pick up small items of equipment when engaging in play activities and when rolling out play dough and using cutters to make shapes. Most children make marks with a variety of painting and writing materials. Teaching fully maximises what the children can do in this aspect of their physical development. Good learning in this aspect is due the direct teaching of skills and the variety of methods used by the teacher to overcome the lack of outdoor facilities and promote progression in the children's physical skills.

Creative development

76. The children make sound progress overall in developing their creative skills and most are on course to meet the nationally recommended levels of attainment by the end of the Reception year. The quality of teaching and learning is good, and indoor activities are, in general, well resourced and organised. Role-play opportunities are carefully planned and enable children to play out imaginary situations and dress up accordingly. They use props and other resources imaginatively and are able to sustain aspects of characters for appropriate periods of time and talk about what they are doing. For example, while at play with the large building bricks, children built a rubbish truck and re-enacted the role of refuse collectors. They became completely engrossed in their roles and played very well together as part of a group. In drama, they responded well to the story of *We're going on a Bear Hunt*, and expanded their imagination through acting out the experiences of going on the bear hunt. Their creative play outdoors however, is restricted by the lack of a suitable outdoor area and equipment for the youngest children to use freely on a daily basis. In their artwork, children paint freely and produce good self-portraits. They learn how to mix colours when painting and clearly they are receiving effective support and guidance from adults while they work. Children thoroughly enjoy their music lessons and learn to listen carefully. With the imaginative use of 'Shep' the fluffy dog puppet, the music teacher effectively helped the children to distinguish the difference between their speaking voices and their singing voices. They sing a variety of simple songs from memory and particularly enjoy participating in action songs.

ENGLISH

77. Overall, standards in English are typical for seven and 11 year olds but standards in writing in Year 6 are below average. This represents an improvement since the last inspection when standards were average at Key Stage 1 and below average at Key Stage 2. The findings of this inspection differ from the results of the 2000 national tests at both key stages where standards were found to be above average in reading and well above average in writing at Key Stage 1 and well above average in English at Key Stage 2. There are significantly more pupils with special educational needs in the current Year 2 and Year 6 than in the previous year groups and this has had an impact on the proportions of pupils who reach average standards. Over the past four years, standards in English at Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 have been above average, but there have been some fluctuations from year to year which reflect the differences between year groups in a small school. When compared with similar schools, pupils' results in the national tests in 2000 were average in reading and well above average in writing at Key Stage 1 and very high in English at Key Stage 2. The school easily exceeded its targets for the percentage of pupils expected to reach average standards in both key stages in 2000. The school has recognised the considerable variation in the composition of different groups of pupils and has set lower but realistic targets for 74 per cent of the current group of pupils in Year 6 to reach average standards. The school has agreed appropriate targets for improvement, which have included a review of writing and the teaching of sounds, spellings and the meaning and use of words throughout the school.

78. Pupils at both key stages achieve well in English as they move through the school. Pupils with special educational needs achieve good standards compared with their previous attainment because they receive well planned and effective support in class and their progress is regularly reviewed. The Additional Literacy programme in Year 3 supports pupils' development well. No significant differences between the achievement of boys and girls were observed during the inspection.

79. At both key stages, standards in speaking and listening are average. Pupils enter the school with variable levels of confidence and spoken language. They quickly develop confidence and enjoy listening to and talking about stories, rhymes and poems. This was evident when Year 2 pupils talked about features of traditional tales and made simple predictions about what might happen next. All pupils listened very attentively to their teacher and to each other's contributions. Some pupils spoke confidently and clearly, but others needed some support and encouragement to help them develop their responses. At Key Stage 2, pupils continue to

listen attentively and productively. In lessons, they respond thoughtfully and show respect for the opinions of others. More able pupils are able to express their ideas and opinions confidently and fluently, often developing the detail and depth of their answers. Average pupils respond clearly to questions, but a number of less able pupils need help to use appropriate terms and language to express their opinions and ideas clearly. In a Year 6 literacy lesson, pupils contributed well to a discussion on the differences between reading and telling a story. All pupils listened well, both to each other and to their teacher. Some pupils were able to make thoughtful comments about how the voice could create suspense or tension, but most pupils were dependent on the teacher's carefully thought-out questions to help them develop their responses. Pupils used an appropriate range of largely informal vocabulary in their answers and responded precisely to questions. However, few of them used more complex structures and vocabulary. At the end of the lesson, pupils were able to give good responses to the discussion in their prepared joint reading of *Matilda*. Although there are appropriate planned opportunities for the subject for pupils to speak in more formal contexts, these are not yet having sufficient impact on the range of vocabulary used by the majority of pupils.

80. Standards in reading are average at both key stages. At all ages, pupils enjoy reading the shared text in the literacy hour, and most do so clearly and often with expressive voices. At Key Stage 1, pupils handle books confidently and take them home regularly to practise their skills. More able pupils read confidently, some with good expression, and are able to talk about the books they like and dislike. Average pupils read simple texts accurately and understand appropriate strategies to read unfamiliar words but they, and some less able pupils, do not always do this automatically. Pupils' enjoyment of, and interest in, books develop well through Key Stage 2. In Year 6, pupils read fluently and with accuracy, and are able to evaluate the texts they read with growing competence. Most are able to talk about the books they read and comment on characters with varying degrees of detail, but few read a wide selection of challenging texts. Less able pupils read appropriate books effectively but are sometimes too passive in their approach to reading unfamiliar words. Research and referencing skills are appropriately developed across the key stage and most pupils are familiar with the Dewey system of classification.

81. Standards in writing are average at the end of Key Stage 1 and below average at the end of Key Stage 2. There is evidence that younger pupils in both key stages achieve higher standards. This is partly because there are fewer pupils with special educational needs in other year groups, and partly because these pupils have benefited from the improvements in teaching at an earlier stage. Average pupils in Year 2 have a secure understanding of how to write a story of an appropriate length for their ages as seen in their work entitled *Ma Liang and the Magic Brush*. More able pupils select a wider range of vocabulary and are beginning to use words to create interesting effects. This was seen in their writing of a story where each page ended with 'when suddenly..' Pupils were able to use their ideas to create a sense of suspense and sometimes humour. Less able pupils, while generally writing coherently, have a variable understanding of how to form simple sentences accurately, particularly in their use of basic punctuation.

82. In Year 6, pupils write in a generally appropriate range of forms, including newspaper reports, biography, stories, instructional writing and writing about their reading. However, writing which uses a more formal range of structures and tone is not sufficiently represented in their work. In the best writing, there is a good range of vocabulary and a lively use of language to create deliberate effects. This was seen in the pupils' writing about *The Night Intruder*, when they created feelings of suspense with such phrases as 'trembling with fear' and 'terrified I curled up into a ball and screamed'. A small number of more able pupils are beginning to use paragraphs appropriately and consistently in their writing. However, an analysis of the pupils' writing indicates variable levels of accuracy, particularly in the consistent use of basic punctuation. Often, pupils do not develop their ideas in sufficient depth or detail. There is evidence of some editing, particularly in the word-processed work, but evidence of systematic planning, drafting and refining is more limited. Average and lower attaining pupils use mainly familiar vocabulary and do not sufficiently draw upon the wider range of vocabulary they encounter in their reading.

83. The school had identified the need to improve standards of presentation and pupils' understanding of phonics and spelling patterns. An analysis of pupils' work indicates that the school has addressed the issue of presentation effectively. Standards of presentation are good across the school. Pupils organise their work

to a clearly understood format and take a pride in presenting their work as neatly and carefully as they can. Pupils' work is valued and respected, and this helps to sustain the good care and quality of work. There are some indications that standards of spelling are beginning to be improved through an increased focus on the use of phonics and spelling patterns, but this is not yet having a consistent effect on all pupils' reading and writing skills.

84. Throughout the school, standards in literacy are average, and the development of literacy skills across the curriculum is generally satisfactory. Although there is evidence of some productive links in subjects such as history to develop pupils' individual research skills using the Internet, there are some missed opportunities to develop the depth and range of pupils' writing and reading. This is so, particularly, in the opportunities for older pupils to develop the skills of skimming and scanning in their reading and to write at length in a more formal argumentative style.

85. The quality of teaching and learning in English is good at both key stages. This is an improvement since the last inspection, when teaching in English was unsatisfactory at Key Stage 2. There are very good relationships between pupils and adults in the classroom. These relationships create a positive atmosphere for learning and give pupils confidence to develop their skills and their understanding, under the guidance of teachers and support staff who know their pupils well. Teachers have good subject knowledge, which is evident in their confident management of the literacy hour and in their clear and interesting presentations, which effectively interest and involve pupils. Most lessons have a brisk, purposeful pace because lessons are well planned and pupils are given a clear understanding of what they are expected to learn.

86. Strengths in the teaching and learning of English across the school were well illustrated in a very good literacy lesson in Year 3, in which the class read from a shared text to help them develop their understanding of compound words. The teacher's lively presentation engaged the pupils' interest, sustained their concentration and helped them to develop useful reading strategies. Through effective questioning, the teacher reinforced pupils' understanding of how to read unfamiliar words and had very good strategies for helping pupils to recognise compound words in the text: "Clap when we read one in the story". There was a very good transition into group work, which was well planned and organised. There was also very good co-operation between the teacher and the learning support assistant, who was productively involved throughout the lesson. They both constantly questioned pupils to ensure their understanding and praised them for their good work. Very good relationships, and high expectations of pupils' behaviour, personal responsibility and standards of work ensured that pupils' made very good gains in their learning.

87. There is a good focus on oral and listening skills throughout the school, and teachers use questions effectively to encourage all pupils to participate, and to extend and develop their responses. Although reading is given good attention in the joint reading sessions which teachers in most classes provide, there are not always enough examples of language around the classroom or books on display to encourage more reluctant readers to extend their range and experience of books and language. There is good on going assessment in most classes, and teachers and learning support assistants keep a good range of recorded evidence of pupils' achievements. Good use is made of this evidence in teachers' evaluations, and their planning of the next stages in pupils' learning. Overall, the quality of marking is satisfactory. In the best practice, pupils are given good recognition for their achievements combined with constructive and clear indications of how they can improve their work. This good practice is not consistently used in all classes.

88. The curriculum in English meets the requirements of the National Curriculum. The National Literacy Strategy has been implemented well and is having a good impact on pupils' learning. The detailed literacy policy supports teaching and learning well. Assessment procedures are good. This is an improvement since the last inspection when there were many shortcomings in the assessment procedures in Key Stage 2. All pupils have individual targets in literacy, which helps them to be involved in taking responsibility for their own learning. Information and communication technology is used satisfactorily to support teaching and learning in English. The co-ordinator is an experienced and committed member of staff. She has monitored teaching and has worked with colleagues to set individual targets for pupils. Pupils' written work has been analysed against clear agreed criteria. Resources in literacy are good, with some good recent purchases to resource

the literacy hour. There is an appropriate range and number of books in the classrooms and the infant and junior libraries. However, the junior library space is too small for groups or classes to use it in developing their research skills. The subject is enhanced by visits from theatre groups such as the Quantum Theatre group and the Playtime Theatre Company. Pupils visit the Stag Theatre in Sevenoaks to see such productions as *Toad of Toad Hall* and *Snow White*. The school's own productions provide memorable experiences for all pupils, either as participants or as part of the audience. These productions have included *Joseph's Technicolor Dream Coat*, *Rats* and *Smike*. Book Fairs are held annually and the whole school has celebrated 'World Book Day'.

MATHEMATICS

89. Pupils in Year 2 attain average standards in numeracy and in all other areas of the mathematics curriculum. This finding is similar to that of the previous inspection. Assessment data show the present Year 2 class had below average attainment on entry to the school. These pupils have made good progress and have achieved well. The results of the national end of key stage tests in 2000 show that, compared with all schools and with similar schools, standards were average in Year 2. The percentage of pupils who attained the nationally expected standard was very high, but the percentage exceeding it was below average. The trend over the last five years has been erratic but the number taking the tests each year is small and this can lead to considerable variations from year to year. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress at this key stage and reach satisfactory standards.

90. In Year 6, standards are average. This is below the results of the national end of key stage tests in 2000, which showed above average standards when compared with schools nationally and with similar schools. With the small numbers involved, such variations are not unusual, particularly when the present class has almost half of its pupils identified with special educational needs, a significant number of whom arrived during Key Stage 2. Analysis of the school's results for the Year 6 national tests shows an erratic picture since 1996. This is not unusual when numbers are small. However, the school has continued to set realistic but challenging targets. The standards achieved in Year 6 are a good improvement compared with the last inspection when attainment was judged to be below average. Past results have shown that boys do less well than girls in the national tests although this was not apparent during the inspection nor was anything of great significance found by the school, following further analysis of their data. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress at this key stage.

91. The quality of teaching and learning is good at Key Stage 1 and leads to good progress by all pupils. This reflects the findings of the previous inspection. Teachers plan their work in line with the National Numeracy Strategy and lessons are well structured. The teachers provide good mental warm-up sessions, in which pupils are keen to offer answers. When pupils are engaged in group activities, they concentrate and work well. In Year 1, pupils know the days of the week, and add and subtract numbers to 20, sort and classify data and make graphs to show the results. They know the basic two and three-dimensional shapes and describe their properties. In the lesson observed, they used appropriate mathematical vocabulary and worked appropriately totalling coins and finding different ways of making given amounts. The Year 2 teacher ensured that all pupils were attentive and all pupils made good progress in extending their use of number bonds. In a restaurant scenario, they totalled bills and worked out which coins to use. Pupils in Year 2 know that, when counting coins, it is easier to start with the highest value first. Previous work shows that almost all work at an appropriate level, with extension work for those capable of higher attainment. Pupils understand the value of digits in tens and units and show understanding of halves and quarters. They understand how to double and halve numbers, extend their knowledge of shapes and tell the time using both digital and analogue clocks. They collect a variety of data and represent this in the form of charts and graphs.

92. The quality of teaching and learning is good at Key Stage 2, and pupils generally make good progress in line with their age and ability. This shows a significant improvement on the findings of the previous inspection, when teaching was unsatisfactory and pupils made unsatisfactory progress. In Year 6, the teacher has a good relationship with the pupils and ensures a good working environment, where pupils are

very attentive, well behaved and keen to learn. In the lesson observed, she provided quick mental work where pupils used digit number cards to display the target number. The teacher planned for all ability groups and all were challenged to extend their knowledge of co-ordinates and translating movements. The higher group was well supported on the computers when writing mathematical procedures to control a screen turtle, and the lowest group had sound support from the teaching assistant. However, the work proved difficult for some pupils and they were unable to continue without support. The analysis of pupils' work shows that most pupils in Year 6 make good progress and work at levels relevant to their age or abilities. They use efficient written methods for computation, such as short multiplication and division, and more able pupils are able to do long multiplication and division. Pupils work at a good level with fractions and percentages and they use this knowledge to work out every day problems involving value added tax. They show an appropriate level of understanding of regular shapes and their properties and find the area of a parallelogram. Pupils use and apply their knowledge of decimals to convert currencies and investigate questions on frequencies. They measure length, capacity and temperature accurately. In other lessons observed, pupils in Year 3 showed good skills in mental work and explained their workings clearly. They added and subtracted numbers confidently and counted in twos, fives and threes. Pupils showed good skills in sorting and organising information and presenting it in a variety of ways. They confidently used a data-handling program on the computer and chose the best graphical representation to display their findings clearly. In Years 4 and 5, good teaching led to pupils' high levels of interest and concentration as they made good progress in extending their knowledge of co-ordinates and using mathematical language. Pupils used terms such as horizontal and vertical axes knowledgeably.

93. Teachers at both key stages are confident with the National Numeracy Strategy and they apply it effectively. Across the school, teachers show good management of the whole class and groups, and work is well matched to pupils' needs. Pupils feel secure and are confident to explain their mathematical reasoning and keen to answer mental mathematics questions. Teachers explain what pupils are going to learn and pupils know what is expected of them. In Year 1, the teacher's constant questioning reinforced pupils' knowledge and understanding of number bonds. By asking pupils to explain how they had worked out their answers, she helped them to become aware of a range of mental strategies. In Year 2, pupils were keen to contribute to solving problems involving knowledge of the five times table and counting forwards and backwards within one hundred. In Year 3, the teacher continually stretched pupils by telling them to "Think hard. Use your brains." She provided lively teaching and the pupils were very keen to participate. In Years 4 and 5, the teacher encouraged speedy use of a grid to add as many digits as possible in three minutes and pupils were enthusiastic about completing the challenge. In Year 6, pupils were well focused and the teacher gave good opportunities for them to explain their workings. Numeracy is appropriately used across the curriculum. In science, pupils use a range of measurements accurately, collect data from their investigations and display them in a range of graphs. Measuring skills are appropriate in technology. There are time lines in history and good use of mathematical skills in map work in geography. Computers are very well used in all classes to support the development of mathematical skills and understanding.

94. The co-ordinator clearly understands what is required to improve standards and manages and monitors the subject well. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection, when it was reported that "the school's organisation and management of mathematics is weak ...policy is not supported by a scheme of work... there is inadequate monitoring and insufficient use is made of assessment and the results of national tests to guide teaching". The assessment of pupils' work and analysis of assessment data are now used well to identify areas for development and to ensure that pupils with special educational needs are identified and supported. There has been good training for teachers who feel confident and skilled in teaching the subject. This is also a significant improvement. Resources are now adequate to enable successful teaching of all aspects of mathematics, and this is also an improvement on the previous inspection, when they were judged to be unsatisfactory and there was an over reliance on a commercial scheme. The school has worked hard since the previous OFSTED inspection and there has been a significant improvement in all its aspects. The subject meets the requirements of the National Curriculum.

SCIENCE

95. Overall, standards in science are typical for seven and eleven year olds. This is similar to the standards reported for pupils at Key Stage 1 in the school's previous OFSTED inspection but an improvement at Key Stage 2 where attainment was judged to be unsatisfactory four years ago. The findings of the inspection differ from the results of the 2000 national tests at Key Stage 2, which showed that standards were well above average. However, the difference between the judgement of the inspection and the results of the tests in 2000 should be treated with caution, because standards in the present Year 6 class are adversely affected by a significant number of pupils with special educational needs. Given their previous attainment at seven, pupils' results in the 2000 science tests were well above average. Over the past four years, standards show a considerable variation from year to year that reflects the relatively small number of pupils in each year group. The pupils also reached above average standards in the 2000 end of Key Stage 1 assessments by teachers. The present Year 2 class, however, also has a significant number of pupils with special educational needs. Throughout the school, pupils with special educational needs make good progress and achieve standards that are satisfactory compared with their previous attainment. This inspection finds no significant difference in the performance of boys and girls, both of whom achieve average standards.

96. In the school's previous inspection, teaching was judged to be sound or better at Key Stage 1, but at Key Stage 2, it was reported as varying from unsatisfactory to very poor. The quality of teaching and learning is now good at both key stages and promotes good progress. Most teachers are confident in their knowledge of the subject and this results in good learning. Throughout the school, a strong emphasis is given to the teaching of experimental and investigative science. Teachers' planning shows a good balance between investigations, factual learning and recording. All pupils enjoy science and are inspired by the enthusiasm of their teachers. This was illustrated well in a very good lesson in Year 1 on the properties of air. The teacher captured and maintained the interest of all pupils by making very good use of resources to make learning both relevant and extremely enjoyable. After asking pupils to look at different things moving, the teacher challenged them to make toy windmills move by means other than pushing. Following on from this, the teacher used a 'rocket balloon' to demonstrate and develop the pupils' understanding that it is not only ourselves that make things move by pushing. The teacher developed the pupils' skills of prediction by asking questions such as 'What will happen to the balloon when I let go?' and, after the successful demonstration, built on their learning by asking, 'How does it move along?' In the Year 2 class, pupils receive an appropriate approach to investigative science. For example, after using pupils to experiment by rolling toy cars down ramps that had different surfaces, the teacher talked with the pupils to help them decide whether the tests were fair. However, not all pupils were given the opportunity to experiment for themselves and, consequently, their ideas were based on the observation of others and under the direction of the teacher. Pupils were provided with an appropriate outline table for recording the results. Teachers emphasise the importance of using the correct scientific vocabulary when pupils are asked to give an explanation of their work. This not only improves the pupils' knowledge and understanding but also enables the teacher to recognise any misconceptions the pupils may have and help to clear them up. An analysis of pupils' work supports this and indicates that most pupils present their work in an appropriate variety of ways, such as drawings, writing, charts and tables. There was little evidence however, of the use of information and communication technology to enhance the pupils' learning.

97. In Key Stage 2, the quality of teaching and learning is consistently good with a number of strengths that have a positive impact on pupils' learning in lessons. Teaching was good in two out of the three lessons seen, and in one lesson, it was very good. In all lessons, the management of pupils is very good and the content is pitched at an appropriately challenging level. The strength of the teaching of science and its impact on learning were well illustrated in a very good lesson in the Year 4/5 class, based on an investigation into which materials make the best thermal insulators. The high expectations of the teacher were clearly evident in the challenging task and illustrated by the intention that pupils should devise their own investigation. The standard of questioning was high and the teacher's clear explanations and very good use of time spent in discussion motivated all pupils and ensured that all pupils learned to think as scientists. The level of interest was high and was maintained by allowing the pupils to explore and undertake an investigation for themselves. They carried out a fair test, for example, using the same sort of container with the same amount of water in it, and

made careful measurements of temperature at regular intervals. They constructed tables to present their results and offered explanations for them. More able pupils used a computer program to record their results in the form of a graph and recognised that objects cool to the temperature of their surroundings when they are left. The teacher maintained a brisk pace, ensured that scientific vocabulary was well understood and, as the lesson came to its conclusion, continued asking questions to promote pupils' scientific understanding, such as, "Which material held the heat best?" and "What is going to happen to the control?" All pupils, including those with special educational needs, learnt from this lesson, as they were well supported by the learning support assistants and were encouraged to talk about and share their ideas.

98. A particularly effective aspect of science teaching is the opportunity for pupils to work together to discuss and develop their own ideas. This was well demonstrated in the Year 5/6 class, when pupils were planning and carrying out an investigation on patterns in the motion of paper spinners. The teacher's questions encouraged pupils to think for themselves and devise their own fair test. The activity offered pupils the opportunity to work together to explore how spinners weighted with paper clips fall when dropped, and if the length of the wings on the spinners makes any difference to how fast the spinners fall. Pupils were keen to engage in scientific discussion and, as each group worked through their investigation, the teacher reminded them to use scientific vocabulary and to repeat the tests several times in order to check the differences. Lesson planning is good in the school, and the activities provided indicate that pupils' learning is well organised. There is good evidence of progression in the development of investigative skills as pupils move through the school. This is a significant improvement since the previous inspection when it was reported that the scientific content of lessons in Key Stage 2 was often trivial. In all lessons, pupils are well supported and secure in their understanding of what they are going to learn. The management of pupils is very good and, as a result, all pupils settle well to their work and make good progress.

99. Science is well supported by a useful policy and scheme of work that provide very good coverage of all aspects of the subject and clear guidance for teachers. Assessment procedures are good and include an end of unit expectation for each pupil, that is closely related to the National Curriculum requirements. The subject is well led by an enthusiastic and knowledgeable co-ordinator, who, together with the headteacher, has monitored the quality of teaching and pupils' learning throughout the school. Appropriate links with numeracy, literacy and information and communication technology were evident during the inspection. Learning resources for science are generally satisfactory. In addition the school has an exciting project to develop the grounds extensively that contains many features to support environmental science. Progress since the last inspection is good overall. Teaching and learning have improved, curricular planning provides good progression in learning and there is now a well-qualified science co-ordinator in place. The subject fully meets the requirements of the National Curriculum.

ART AND DESIGN

100. During the inspection, it was possible to observe only one lesson in art and design in Year 1. Judgements are based on an analysis of pupils' work and teachers' planning throughout the school. Indications are that standards are average by the age of seven and above average by the age of eleven. This judgement is similar to that made by the school's previous inspection at Key Stage 1, but shows that standards have improved at Key Stage 2, where the quality of teaching is now significantly higher. Pupils, including those who have special educational needs, achieve well in this subject. The school provides opportunities for pupils who have a particular talent in the subject to use their skills and knowledge at a high level.

101. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory, overall, at Key Stage 1, although good teaching was observed in Year 1, where examples of pupils' work were also of a high standard. Pupils get off to a good start in Year 1, where the teacher provides well planned opportunities for them to draw, paint, make collages and work with textiles. There is good teaching of basic skills, such as drawing techniques, modelling with clay, weaving and sewing. For example, pupils contributed to a class wall-hanging by sewing beads, buttons and pasta shapes on to a felt square to make a design. They created a picture by weaving fabric

strips through wire mesh and painted colourful designs for a 'magic carpet'. In the lesson that was observed, good features included clear explanations by the teacher, so that pupils knew exactly what was expected of them, and skilful questioning, which challenged pupils to find ways of improving their work. In Year 2, where no teaching was seen, pupils' work was of a sound standard. It showed that effective links were made with the pupils' learning in history. Pupils have made sketches of old objects, which show that they have been taught to observe detail carefully. Most of the work was of a typical standard for pupils of this age. Pupils in Year 2 have also produced pictures of the 'Great Fire of London' that combine different techniques. They used collage techniques soundly to create a picture on a colour wash background. Pupils attain satisfactory standards in drawing, painting and collage, but their work shows little individual flair or imagination. Work is well planned to develop pupils' skills and knowledge. This is particularly helpful to the new teacher in Year 2.

102. The quality of teaching and learning at Key Stage 2 is good. An analysis of the pupils' work across all the year groups indicates that the teaching of a range of skills in art and design enables pupils to make good progress in their learning and to achieve high standards. In Year 3, where pupils are learning about the work of William Morris, they have gained access to the Internet and retrieved examples of his designs, which they are exploring as part of their topic on repeating patterns. In this case, good teaching has ensured that pupils are able to generate ideas for their own artwork while learning more about a famous artist whose influence can be seen in many aspects of modern culture. At Key Stage 2, teachers use sketchbooks effectively to teach observational drawing skills. Pupils in Years 4 and 5 have produced some good drawings of plants, as well as masks showing two different profiles. This is developed further in Year 6, where pupils have drawn moving figures from different angles and detailed sketches of buildings. Teachers provide pupils with opportunities to use a wide range of media and techniques in their work in order to create different effects. Pupils in Years 4 and 5 have produced pastel portraits of famous Tudor people, using smudging and shading techniques successfully to achieve good results. In Year 6, good teaching of specific skills has enabled pupils to produce silk paintings of a high standard, which show both imagination and careful use of tools and materials. They have also created long stitch pictures of penguins, which show attention to detail and high levels of skill in sewing.

103. The co-ordinator provides sound leadership in the subject. She has produced a helpful scheme of work for each class, which combines the best features of both the school's previous scheme and the guidelines published by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority. This provides a good structure to support pupils' learning, and is frequently reviewed and modified in the light of experience. At present, the co-ordinator monitors pupils' work informally by talking to other teachers and looking at work on display. The school's monitoring cycle shows that art is due to be monitored more rigorously in the autumn term 2001. The school takes part in competitions run by local organisations, such as the amateur dramatic society and a secondary school. Pupils recently won the prize for 'best overall primary school' in the competition organised by the secondary school. The parent teacher association also recently held a competition for pupils to decorate masks, many of which show imaginative use of colour and design. Pupils' work is displayed to very good effect around the school and often celebrated in the weekly 'Achievement Assembly'. Teachers make good use of information and communication technology to support pupils' learning. There is a satisfactory range of resources for the subject, but examples of artwork from a range of cultures are limited. Assessment procedures are satisfactory but are about to be developed to bring them into line with other subjects. The subject enjoys a high profile within the school.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

104. It was possible to observe only two lessons at Key Stage 1 during the inspection. Judgements are based on an analysis of pupils' work and teachers' planning, and discussions with pupils and teachers. Indications are that standards are average in Year 2 and Year 6, which is the same as at the time of the school's previous inspection in 1997. Pupils' achievement in the subject is satisfactory, including pupils who have special educational needs.

105. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory at both key stages. In the lesson observed in Year 2, where pupils were making a 'moving monster', the teacher reinforced pupils' earlier learning effectively through questioning, before moving them on to the next part of their task. They assembled syringes, plastic bottles, tubing and balloons to create a pneumatic system to make their monster move. The pupils knew that it was air that created the movement, but some of them lacked the manual skills to achieve what proved to be a difficult process of assembly. Although sound, their work shows that many lack original ideas and need considerable direction from the teacher. However, the teacher's clear instructions and demonstration enabled many to complete their monster unaided, which they were then encouraged to evaluate by saying whether it worked well and what could be done to improve it. In Year 1, careful teaching of skills enabled pupils to design and make picture frames that were of a good standard for the age of the pupils. Pupils began by examining a selection of commercially produced frames, from which they drew ideas to design their own. They learned and practised the skills of sawing safely and joining pieces of wood using a glue gun. They then used these skills to make a picture frame and finally decorated it. This was a good example of a well-planned series of lessons, which built progressively on pupils' knowledge and skills and enabled them to understand that both the function and the appearance of a product are important.

106. At Key Stage 2, where no lessons were observed, an analysis of teachers' planning and pupils' completed work shows that pupils are given a broad range of experiences in designing and making that build effectively on their previous learning. In Year 3, pupils design and make sandwiches, using different types of bread and interesting fillings. They are very careful about hygiene when handling food. Pupils in Years 4 and 5 design and make masks, using a variety of materials and joining techniques, including weaving and plaiting. In Year 6, pupils work together to produce a book of nursery rhymes with moving parts. The finished product shows that they considered the needs and interests of the children who would read it and tried out ideas to see if they worked. One pupil wrote: "The cow didn't quite work so we changed it to a wheel which worked a lot better than the original moving part". Pupils evaluated their work once it was completed and one pupil wrote: "If I did this project again, I would probably experiment a bit more to make it a little more complex". The teaching places an appropriate emphasis on the design process. Pupils draw detailed, labelled sketches and list the components needed to make their product. Teachers make effective links with other subjects. For example, pupils in Year 3 used their knowledge of electrical circuits when they designed and made lighthouses with flashing lights and robots with flashing eyes. There was limited evidence of pupils using information and communication technology to support their learning, although pupils in Year 6 used a digital camera to photograph their finished work.

107. The co-ordinator provides sound leadership in the subject and is aware of how it needs to be developed. She has produced a scheme of work, in collaboration with staff, which incorporates the best features of the school's existing scheme and the more recent Qualifications and Curriculum Authority guidelines. The content of each topic is reviewed and modified appropriately in the light of experience. The scheme of work provides a helpful framework for staff, whose own expertise is limited. To date, the co-ordinator's monitoring of the subject has been done informally through discussions with colleagues. More rigorous monitoring is planned to take place in the autumn term 2001 as part of the school's planned programme of work sampling and classroom observation. A trolley of resources in each key stage ensures that pupils have adequate resources to use when making products. Assessment procedures are satisfactory, at present, but the school is planning to develop them further to bring them up to the standard seen in some other subjects.

GEOGRAPHY

108. During the inspection, the teaching of geography was observed in Years 1, 3 and 6. Judgements are based on these observations and on the analysis of pupils' work throughout the school, discussions with pupils and teachers and on the school's planning. The evidence indicates that pupils reach average standards and that their progress and attainment are generally satisfactory by Year 2 and Year 6. This judgement represents a good improvement in standards since the last inspection when standards were judged to be in line with national expectations at Key Stage 1, but below expectations at Key Stage 2. Pupils with special

educational needs make satisfactory progress relative to their previous attainment. There are no differences in the attainment of boys and girls.

109. The evidence indicates that the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory at Key Stage 1. In the previous inspection, geography was reported as being well taught. An analysis of pupils' work, and discussions with pupils in Year 2, show that they have studied and are aware of features of lifestyles in Mexico at a level that is typical for their ages. For example, they have looked at aspects of life, such as the homes, food and jobs of the people who live there, and describe what the climate is like. More able pupils talk about the main differences between their village and the nearby town of Sevenoaks and are able to give directions on how to walk to the well in the village from the school. In a Year 1 lesson to develop pupils' map skills and their understanding of Kemsing, aerial photographs were used effectively to stimulate discussion. The pupils' existing knowledge was built on as they enthusiastically identified known human and physical features and discovered the school. The teacher harnessed the pupils' interest well with the story *Town Mouse, Country Mouse* and by encouraging pupils to ask and answer questions. This developed their understanding of the differences between towns and the country. Work and photographs on display show that pupils have used the local village to look at the main physical features and have talked with the people who work there. Teachers use the school surroundings well to extend pupils' understanding of environmental issues, and by asking them to identify what they like and dislike about parts of the school. The work planned for pupils is appropriately challenging for most pupils to respond to at their own level.

110. At Key Stage 2, the quality of teaching and learning is good. This represents a significant improvement since the previous inspection when much of the teaching was judged to be poor and failed to meet the requirements of the National Curriculum. In a Year 3 lesson, the teacher used learning resources effectively to assist pupils in their understanding of how to plan a simple route from Kemsing to a specified destination by road. The teacher's control of the pupils was good and they were keen to work. Pupils made good progress and most were able to look at the road maps and plot the quickest route to places as far apart as London and Manchester. Questions were used skilfully to reinforce and promote the pupils' ability to use a road atlas and to follow precise directions, such as 'Go west from Kemsing, carry on north to..... now give me the road number on which you have been travelling'. An analysis of pupils' work showed that they had carried out a survey on how and where people in the village travel to work and had used a computer program to present their findings in the form of a graph. Most pupils make good progress in the development of their geographical skills. For instance, in the Year 5/ 6 lesson on how to locate places on maps, pupils learnt how to use six-figure grid references to identify and match features shown on a map. The teacher effectively demonstrated the close links with mathematics by reinforcing the learning of co-ordinates and always starting at the horizontal before the vertical. Pupils with special educational needs received suitable support from the learning support assistant and consequently made sound progress and learnt how to use four-figure grid references. There was good control of the pupils and an appropriately high expectation of what the pupils could achieve. Most pupils understand what scale means and use it to work out distances between places such as Cardiff and Liverpool. They describe the route taken with reference to the eight points of the compass. Pupils mostly draw on their knowledge and understanding well and use a range of geographical skills to help them investigate a variety of places and environments. By Year 6, pupils have made steady gains in their knowledge and understanding of different mountain environments. In their work, they name and locate a number of mountain ranges such as the Austrian Alps and the Himalayas, and through personal research, using sources such as maps, pictures and the Internet, they find out what the landscape is like and what the people do in the area.

111. The leadership of geography is satisfactory, as the school's emphasis has been on English, mathematics and science since the last inspection. The co-ordinator is new to the post and very aware of the strengths and weaknesses in the subject. She has a clear understanding of the developments necessary. The policy and scheme of work are good and provide very clear guidance for teachers' planning, particularly where there are two different age groups in one class. This is an improvement since the previous inspection when curricular planning was a key issue. The analysis of pupils' work shows that their literacy skills are developed appropriately in the subject. Pupils' numeracy skills and the use of information and communication

technology are also applied well in geography. Resources are satisfactory to support the newly planned curriculum. Fieldwork is used well to develop the pupils' geographical concepts. For example, at Key Stage 1, good use is made of the local environment and at Key Stage 2, pupils are taken to places further afield, such as Sayer's Croft and Ashdown Forest to extend their geographical knowledge and skills.

HISTORY

112. During the inspection, it was only possible to observe the teaching of history in Year 2 and Year 6. Judgements are based on this evidence, an analysis of pupils' work in all years, discussions with pupils about their work and an examination of the school's planning. Indications are that average standards are achieved in Year 2 and Year 6. Attainment is satisfactory in both key stages and all pupils, including the well above average proportion of pupils with special educational needs in both Year 2 and Year 6, make good progress. There is evidence of higher attainment in younger pupils in Key Stage 2. This represents an improvement in standards since 1997 when standards in Key Stage 2 were below average. There are no differences in the attainment of boys and girls.

113. The quality of teaching and learning at Key Stage 1 is good. In a Year 2 lesson, as part of their work on Florence Nightingale, pupils consolidated their knowledge of the main events of her life in a well-focused introductory question and answer session with their teacher. Using their knowledge, they then created a list of questions they wanted to ask, to find out more about her life. They were enthralled when their teacher told them that Florence Nightingale was going to pay them a visit and they could ask their question in person. As a result of good co-operative planning between the teacher and the classroom assistant, pupils were very well involved in developing their understanding of the difficulties under which Florence Nightingale worked and conditions in hospitals in the Crimea. All pupils were able to participate because the teacher's management of the group was effective and relationships in the classroom were productive and good. The lesson concluded usefully with pupils considering what they had learned from Florence Nightingale's 'visit'. An analysis of pupils' work in Year 1 indicates that pupils appropriately develop their awareness of how objects change over time and how this time can be presented as a time line when they present changes that have occurred in their own lives.

114. The quality of teaching and learning in Key Stage 2 is good. In the good Year 6 lesson observed, pupils were learning about some of the ways in which important people in Tudor times were represented in their portraits, and how observations about these portraits could be useful to historians. They also considered the evidence from extracts written at the time, about the same people. The teacher had collected prints of portraits of Queen Elizabeth I made at different times in her life and comments made by different court ambassadors, which involved the pupils well in their learning. They took a full part in discussions about the portraits, prompted by key questions from the teacher, who guided them effectively to make appropriate and relevant observations. Pupils learned about some of the conventions used in portraits at that time to represent power and status, and the political importance of these portraits. The teacher then provided an interesting contrast with the portraits by giving pupils examples of contemporary comment about Elizabeth I. In pairs, pupils discussed the differences and the reasons for these differences. Questions about the point of view of the writer were asked and some more able pupils were able to link their knowledge of relationships between France and Britain at the time to offer explanations for the less favourable comments. The analysis of work produced by Year 6 pupils indicates that pupils have a good insight into the way of life, beliefs and achievements of Ancient Greece and the legacy of that civilisation. Good use is made of information and communication technology in pupils' individual research projects. There are, however, some missed opportunities to develop older pupils' literacy skills further in such areas as presenting a balanced argument, report writing and writing from different points of view. In Years 3 and 4, pupils have good opportunities to develop their learning about life in Roman Britain when they visit the Roman villa at Lullingstone. The visit is well supported by their work on how Roman towns and roads were planned and built. Pupils in both key stages present their work carefully and neatly. Teachers' marking of pupils' work is generally supportive and encouraging but there are some variations in the use of constructive comments to help pupils to improve.

115. The subject coordinator is an experienced teacher who is well organised and knowledgeable about the subject. Although she has not had the opportunity to observe the subject being taught throughout the school, the whole school cycle of review and monitoring shows when this is scheduled to happen. A good policy supports teaching and learning in the subject. The school has a coherent scheme of work based on units of work from the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority guidelines, the Local Education Authority's scheme and the school's own unit of work on history in the local area. This is an improvement since the previous inspection when curricular planning was unsatisfactory. Assessment procedures are satisfactory. Good links are made with pupils' work in other subjects, such as music, art and physical education, as when older pupils explore Tudor dance and music and make their own Tudor portraits. The school is beginning to develop its own collection of artefacts, but also makes good use of loans from local services. It makes use of a number of experts who visit the school to talk to the pupils. They include members of the local historical society and older members of the community, who talk about their childhood and the toys they played with. Classes in both key stages explore the Kemsing area and make visits to such places of interest as Hever Castle and Knole House. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, for example, through their understanding of the legacy of ancient civilisations to modern society and discussions about the morality of actions carried out in the past.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

116. Standards are average in Year 2 and above average in Year 6. Information and communication technology is becoming one of the school's strengths. This judgement shows a very good improvement on the findings of the previous inspection, when attainment at Key Stage 1 was in line with the national average but below average at the end of Key Stage 2. Other evidence indicates that previous attainment was very low and improvement has, in fact, been very good. Examples of past work provide evidence of a broad and balanced curriculum with appropriately challenging work. At Key Stage 1, pupils make steady progress and show positive attitudes to their work. At Key Stage 2 pupils make good progress and produce a good standard of work. Pupils with special educational needs make progress in line with their peers.

117. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory at Key Stage 1. At the time of the last inspection, no judgements were made, but other evidence indicates that it has improved since then. Teachers plan their work well, in line with national guidelines, and pupils are now building systematically on their knowledge and skills in the subject. As a result, pupils in Year 2 show appropriate skills in controlling a programmable toy and giving instructions to find treasure in a maze. The sound teaching they receive enables pupils to enter, retrieve and store their work. They are taught how to produce text and pictures and to handle and display simple data. In Year 1, careful teaching has led to pupils learning to use the basic tools in a paint package to produce abstract pictures. In the two lessons observed, pupils in Year 1 showed good concentration in learning the basic control commands and in Year 2, they built on this by writing more complex procedures.

118. The quality of teaching and learning is good at Key Stage 2 and shows a significant improvement since the previous inspection, when, although no clear judgements were made, teaching and learning were obviously poor. Teachers at Key Stage 2 are confident users of information and communication technology and impart their skills well to the pupils. They carefully build on the pupils' knowledge and each step in their learning builds on the previous one well so that, by Year 6, pupils are becoming highly competent. In Year 3, the teacher had planned a unit of work which pupils were able to tackle independently and confidently. They had collected data and chose their own ways of presenting it in a range of graphs, choosing the most appropriate. She supported them well but made them solve their own problems rather than giving solutions; "Think! Have a go! Use your brains!" In Year 4, the teacher is particularly skilled and pupils learn information and communication technology skills and use them well across the curriculum. This was evident in their use of software to handle and display data from their investigation into the insulation properties of materials in science. Previous work showed that they could handle and combine text and graphics. They had been taught well how to use the digital camera and use the software to produce their photographs. In the Year 5/6 class, the teacher has ensured, through her planning, that the pupils have good opportunities to continue to build on previously learned skills across the curriculum. By the age of 11, they show good skills in

communicating and handling text and data. They show an awareness of audience when combining text and graphics in their work. Through skilful teaching, pupils have scanned in pictures and text and uploaded it to their website. Across the curriculum, pupils have been taught to use multi-media applications and the Internet to find information. They use a spreadsheet to handle data and ask "what if..." questions if elements are changed. The pupils have the opportunity to control events in a predetermined way, sense physical data, and explore patterns and relationships with the aid of computer simulations or models. Good levels of interest are maintained as pupils continue through the school and teachers work well with pupils. They ask taxing questions to see if they fully understand what they are doing.

119. The headteacher provides very good leadership through his knowledge and enthusiasm. He and the governor with responsibility for the subject provide very clear direction for its development and monitor this very well. The subject now meets the requirements of the National Curriculum. All aspects of the National Curriculum programme of study are addressed, and there is a clear, concise well-structured scheme of work in place. Major weaknesses reported by the previous inspection have been addressed. Generally, teachers plan well to use information and communication technology as a tool for learning across the curriculum. This was raised as an issue by the 1998 inspection report. However, at the time of the inspection, little evidence was seen of pupils using computers to support their work in science or design and technology. Pupils now have a planned programme of access to computers. The computers were previously old and pupils viewed them as outdated. These have been improved. The expenditure on information and communication technology has been well targeted. There is an average ratio of pupils to modern computers and the rising standards are a clear indication, not only of the good quality teaching but also of money well spent. The subject enhances pupils' personal and social development as they work well in pairs, sharing tasks, sensibly discuss which options they will choose and relate positively to peers and adults alike. They take a pride in their achievement.

MUSIC

120. Pupils throughout the school attain above average standards for their age and thoroughly enjoy their music making activities. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. The quality of provision for music has greatly improved since the appointment of a music specialist. Junior age pupils sing with enthusiasm and skill, matching the dynamics of their voices to the requirements of different songs. For example, when singing as a large group, they changed from singing a lively action song to a very reflective hymn, performing both with complete conviction and equal enjoyment. They also hold their own line when singing rounds or in harmony and produce a very good overall sound. Their composing skills are not as strong as their singing, but are average by the end of Year 6.

121. Younger pupils sing well, showing good control of pitch, dynamics and rhythm. They compose and perform simple three note tunes, using chime bars with increasing confidence, imagination and control. Lessons are well planned and prepared with a broad range of musical activities that are suitably challenging. As a result, all pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress and achieve well relative to their previous attainment.

122. The quality of teaching and learning throughout the school is good, overall. Music is taught by the co-ordinator, who is a music specialist employed by the school. His subject knowledge is excellent and whole school singing and choir practices are of the highest quality. He uses his knowledge well to challenge and extend pupils' creative abilities while at the same time encouraging a wide range of varied active participation, from singing rounds to action songs. The pupils respond with enthusiasm and experience the sheer joy of singing. By keeping a quick pace and introducing plenty of variety, the teacher keeps pupils' interest and, because they are alert, they perform well. The teacher takes each class in turn and provides good lessons that cover all the required musical elements in interesting ways. However, at times, the organisation and management of whole class lessons are insufficiently rigorous, and, as a result, the occasional interruption by some pupils goes uncorrected. This was evident in lessons seen in Year 3 and Years 5/6. Both lessons were, however, led with a high level of expertise that inspired the pupils to improve their performance. In Year 3, pupils listened to the Beatles recording of the song *Yesterday* and explored

how it could be improved. The teacher used his musical ability effectively to improve their singing and developed their ability to evaluate their performances. By the end of the lesson, pupils were singing in tune with expression and combining several layers of sound with an increasing awareness of the combined effect. They made improvements to their own work and made evaluative comments on the final effect. In Years 5 and 6, pupils learn how to develop their singing voices and their performing skills. Pupils at this stage have a good understanding of the structure of music and many are confident in reading musical notation. They maintain their own rhythmic phrases as part of a group, when singing and performing with instruments such as the drums and xylophone, and show an awareness of how the different parts fit together. Pupils learn new songs well and show that they can sing expressively with sound attention to breathing, diction, phrasing and pitch. The quality of learning in lessons, however, is often increased because the pupils' enjoy music and their interest enables them to make the best use of the opportunities provided by the teacher. Across the school, pupils are given opportunities to record their work in lessons and to listen to and evaluate what they have done. However, the quality of the tape recording system is not of the same high standard as the pupils' performance.

123. The policy has been updated and the scheme of work addresses all aspects of the programme of study. The subject is adequately resourced. There is a good supply of percussion instruments and music to listen to that enable pupils to broaden their skills in musical appreciation, but few tuned instruments. Pupils have opportunities to join the choir, receive musical tuition from visiting specialist teachers and take part in four recorder groups according to their level of expertise. The singing of pupils in the school's choir is inspirational. Over 50 pupils attend and when practising 'I will sing with the spirit', sing the 'on top' and 'underneath' descants with great skill. The school also has a Chamber choir, which unfortunately was not seen in operation. Overall, music has a high profile in the school and makes a very good contribution to the pupils' spiritual, social and cultural development. The pupils listen to and sing reflective pieces of music from a range of cultures and have good quality opportunities to collaborate in performing.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

124. It is not possible to make a judgement about standards of attainment at the end of Key Stage 1, as no lessons were seen in Year 2. Standards in Year 1 are typical of those seen in most schools in gymnastics and pupils make satisfactory progress. At Key Stage 2, standards are at least average across the physical education curriculum, but no gymnastics and only one games lesson were observed. Standards are above average in dance, and pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress. In Year 3, pupils showed average standards in hockey and made steady progress in developing their stick handling skills. School records show above average attainment in swimming. There are no differences in the standards achieved by boys and girls. These judgements show a significant improvement on the findings of the school's previous OFSTED inspection, when standards were below average at Key Stage 2 and National Curriculum requirements were not met.

125. In the Key Stage 1 lesson seen, the quality of teaching and learning was good. In this Year 1 gymnastics lesson, the teacher encouraged pupils to improve their skills by asking pupils to evaluate "What makes a good balance? How can I make it better?" They listened carefully to the teacher's instructions and eagerly demonstrated their balances. The brisk pace ensured pupils were constantly engaged in physical activity and sustained effort. The teacher developed their learning well by extending the level of challenge as pupils were required to combine several balances into a sequence.

126. At Key Stage 2, the quality of teaching and learning is good. This judgement indicates a good improvement on that of the school's previous OFSTED inspection, which, although no judgement was given, inferred unsatisfactory teaching and learning at Key Stage 2. Teaching and learning were good in a well organised and well managed Year 3 lesson, which was taught by a national hockey coach. The lesson took place inside because of the bad weather. The lesson was well structured into appropriate group activities to develop the pupils' hockey and ball skills. The coach gave instructions clearly, and emphasised the need for safety, and the pupils took careful notice of what she said. The class teacher was well deployed and good use of ample learning resources supported the pupils' progress. The pupils were clearly shown how to hold a hockey stick correctly, how to dribble and how to shoot. They made good progress in learning these skills and in bending their knees appropriately. In the dance lessons seen in all classes in the key stage, the quality of

teaching and learning was consistently very good. This resulted in above average standards as pupils developed their skills very well. In all lessons, teachers showed extremely good management and control of the lessons and pupils were very involved, concentrated well and sustained a high pace of movement. They listened intently to the instructions of the teachers, worked hard and behaved very well. In Year 3, the teacher set the scene well for a dance and drama representation of the Roman invasion. She sequenced the lesson extremely well and pupils were really immersed in the different scenarios. They showed good movement and gesture and changed mood skilfully. Their movement ranged from the time you could hear a pin drop to the full fury of battle. In Years 4 and 5, the teacher showed excellent management of an exciting lesson, where pupils moved to a sequence of how rubbish is recycled, including crushing. As a result of high quality teaching, pupils were fully involved in the lesson. They used a range of movements and were encouraged by skilled questioning to evaluate their own performances and those of other groups. As a result of this skilled evaluation, all groups refined their movements well. In Years 5 and 6, the teacher provided a very good aerobic warm up which prepared pupils well for the three Tudor dances they were learning. The pupils danced well, mastered the difficult steps and increased their knowledge of the historical period they were studying. They learned that Tudor costumes imposed certain restrictions on the movements in the dances of the time. Pupils enjoyed the lesson and learned much. They behaved very sensibly and without the slightest embarrassment danced as "ladies and gentlemen". All pupils, including pupils with special educational needs, made good progress. Swimming was not taught during the period of the inspection. However, discussions with teachers and analysis of the school's planning and records show that this is well organised. It is taught mainly in the school's own pool by a qualified swimming teacher and almost all pupils swim at least 25 metres safely and confidently before they leave the school. About half of them exceed this level and learn deep-water skills and other strokes at a local pool.

127. The management of the subject is good and has improved significantly since the school's last inspection, when there was no management in place. The co-ordinator has produced a good policy and scheme of work that ensure all aspects of the curriculum are systematically covered. At the time of the previous inspection, the school had no policies or scheme of work to ensure that pupils received the full National Curriculum. The school provides a good range of extracurricular activities for sport. There are clubs for football, netball and Kwik cricket, and, in addition to teams for these games, the school has teams for athletics and swimming. The football team is doing well at present and has won three out of its last four matches. The school has a very good field, and adequate hard surfaced area and hall, which support learning well. It is also fortunate to have its own swimming pool, which is well used during the summer. Adventurous activities take place in the school grounds and on the annual residential visit for older pupils. The subject contributes well to pupils' personal development. It gives opportunities for pupils to develop team spirit and compete fairly within the understood rules of the games. It fulfils the National Curriculum requirements.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

128. At the ages of seven and 11 years, pupils' knowledge and understanding of religious education meet the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. This is an improvement since 1997 when standards were below average at Key Stage 2. Judgements in this inspection are based on classroom observations, analysis of pupils' work, scrutiny of teachers' planning and displays and discussions with teachers and pupils. The school has a caring, supportive ethos, which encourages pupils to respect the ideas and opinions of others. Together with collective worship, religious education makes a significant contribution to pupils' personal development. Pupils make good progress as they move through the school. Pupils with special educational needs are well involved in lessons and make good progress, especially when they receive well-targeted support in lessons.

129. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory at Key Stage 1. Pupils have confidence and trust in their teachers and other adults who work with them in their classrooms. This helps pupils to be involved well with lesson activities and to develop confidence in offering their ideas and responses. In a Year 2 lesson, pupils talked about situations in which they had felt jealousy and offered solutions to imaginary situations which might occur in their own lives. The teacher used glove puppets effectively to encourage and support pupils' responses. These young pupils understood well that it was more constructive to try to resolve conflicts than to prolong a disagreement. They offered sensible and relevant suggestions to resolve difficulties caused by jealousy. They were able to link the theme of their lesson with the story of Joseph and

his brothers and suggested that they should have talked about their problems. Year 1 pupils used their knowledge of the Christmas story to make illustrated folding books.

130. The quality of teaching and learning is good at Key Stage 2. Analysis of pupils' work shows that pupils in Years 5 and 6 are developing a sound awareness of aspects of traditions and celebrations in the Sikh religion. They understand how people express their identity and their religious faith through outward symbols and compare their knowledge of both Jewish and Sikh traditions. They are able to refer to significant features of a Christian church and to identify these features in plans of their own local parish church. As a result of well-structured teaching, younger pupils in the key stage have a good understanding of the importance and symbolic significance of food in the Jewish faith. Pupils know the significance of the story of Moses and the first Passover and how it is remembered today. Teachers use their good subject knowledge to form questions skilfully and to make constructive links with different aspects of pupils' learning. Pupils know that the Jewish books of law are found in the Torah and also in the Old Testament of the Christian faith. A strength of the teaching and learning in religious education is the sensitivity and respect that teachers and pupils show towards the feelings, beliefs and opinions of others. There are useful links with other areas in the curriculum such as the use of information and communication technology to retrieve additional information from a website about the Jewish religion. Pupils' listening and speaking skills are developed well in informal discussions which are a strong feature in both key stages. However, there are limitations in the opportunities given to older pupils to develop detailed discussions and considered arguments in their written and oral work.

131. The subject is well led by a senior member of staff who is interested in and committed to its development. The scheme of work, which was produced to meet the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus in 1999, has been identified as in need of further revision to take recent changes into account and to meet the requirements of the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority. The process has begun and is due for completion in the summer term. The school's resources in the subject are satisfactory, but good use is made of resources borrowed from the Resources Centre for the area to enhance the school's provision. The co-ordinator has monitored teachers' planning and is scheduled to undertake observations of teaching when the subject is identified on the school's cycle of monitoring. Assessment procedures are satisfactory and follow the whole school format. There are good links with the local church and clergy, and pupils in the school take part in the flower festival and in carol services at Christmas. A good illustration of these links is the involvement of the school in the 'travelling crib' at Christmas. The crib is brought to the school assembly by pastoral assistants and then to each class where a candle is lit and pupils are given time to share the experience. During their time at school, as part of their studies of the Jewish faith, pupils visit a synagogue, but there are few other visits or visitors to enrich the curriculum. The school has identified the development of links with other faiths as a priority. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development when they consider how they should recognise that people in their lives are special and Jesus is special in the lives of Christians. Their studies of the world's great faiths helps them to consider values and traditions other than their own.