

INSPECTION REPORT

BLIGH INFANT SCHOOL

Strood, Rochester

LEA area: Medway

Unique reference number: 118500

Headteacher: Mrs Celia Toone

Reporting inspector: Mrs Janet Sinclair
19824

Dates of inspection: 19 – 22 November 2001

Inspection number: 194042
Full inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	5 to 7
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Blight Way Strood Rochester Kent
Postcode:	ME2 2XJ
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Miss D Neale
Date of previous inspection:	29 April 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
19824	Mrs J Sinclair	Registered inspector	English, areas of learning for children in the Foundation Stage, equal opportunities, English as an additional language, music.	The school's results and achievements. How well is the school led and managed?
9756	Mr K Parsons	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes behaviour and personal development. How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
12367	Mr A Green	Team inspector	Mathematics, information and communication technology, history, religious education.	How well are pupils taught? How good are curricular and other opportunities?
1224	Mr G Todd	Team inspector	Science, design and technology, geography, art and design physical education, special educational needs.	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Bligh Community Infant School is situated in Strood in Rochester. It mainly draws its pupils from the local housing estates of Earl and Temple Farm. Children's attainments on entry are broadly average. At the time of the inspection there were 207 pupils on roll. There are 48 pupils with special educational needs, which is an average proportion. Two pupils have statements of special educational need, which is broadly average. There are four pupils who speak English as an additional language; their first languages are Punjabi and Hindi. The number of boys and girls is about the same. The socio-economic circumstances of the pupils are broadly average with 16 per cent claiming a free school meal, which is slightly below the average of 19 per cent. The number on roll is smaller than at the time of the previous inspection; there has been a gradual decline in numbers over time. The school attracts a number of pupils outside the normal times of admission. A good proportion of these have special educational needs and this can affect the attainment within particular year groups.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is an effective school. Children start school with broadly average standards. By the time they leave the school at the age of seven, standards are above average overall and pupils achieve well. They do well because the quality of teaching is good and teachers ensure tasks are well matched to pupils' learning needs. There is very good provision for pupils with special educational needs and they do particularly well. The head teacher provides good leadership and is well supported by all of her staff. The school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- Standards are above average in reading, writing, mathematics and science by the end of Year 2, because pupils are taught well and good use is made of assessment information to plan appropriate work.
- The headteacher provides good leadership, which is focused on raising standards, the inclusion of all pupils and the creation of a climate where all are valued.
- There is very good provision for pupils with special educational needs (SEN) and as a result they achieve very well. Learning support assistants (LSAs) make a strong contribution to their learning.
- There are very good assessment procedures for English and mathematics.
- Provision for moral and social development is good and, as a result, pupils have positive attitudes to their work, behave well and work together happily.
- Pupils have a strong respect for the feelings, values and beliefs of others and the school promotes this well through religious education, assemblies and visitors from different cultural backgrounds.
- The school's partnership with parents is very good

What could be improved

- The proportion of pupils exceeding the expected Level 2 in writing and provision for writing across the curriculum.
- Opportunities for pupils to use computers regularly.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made good improvement since its previous inspection in 1997. The school has worked hard to address the issues raised and, as a result, standards are rising steadily. The quality of teaching and learning has improved significantly and is now good overall. The headteacher provides good leadership and the school development plan is now a useful tool for establishing the school's priorities. Cost effectiveness has improved because the school evaluates its spending to ensure it meets the needs of pupils. The deputy headteacher monitors the curricular provision effectively and learning support assistants are now very well deployed across the school. The school is well placed to make further improvements.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 2 based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	Compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1999	2000	2001	2001
reading	D	C	B	B
writing	C	D	C	C
mathematics	C	C	B	B

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

This information shows that the performance of pupils in 2001 was above the national average and that of similar schools in reading and mathematics and average in writing. The results of teacher assessments in science showed standards to be average. Standards are gradually improving in reading and mathematics and fluctuate in writing. Over time, few pupils have attained at the higher Level 3 in writing although this was much improved in 2001, being almost in line with the national average. Pupils with special educational needs attained well in all areas tested with most reaching the expected Level 2. The school's trend in improvement is around the national trend in reading, writing and mathematics.

Inspection evidence shows that standards at the end of Year 2, are above average in reading, writing, mathematics and science. Pupils are achieving well. They are average in all other subjects and pupils are achieving satisfactorily. Standards are continuing to rise as a result of the school's very good use of assessment and target setting, good teaching and very good provision for pupils with special educational needs. The school is on course to reach its challenging targets for literacy and numeracy

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils enjoy coming to school. They have positive attitudes and are keen to learn.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms.	Good. Pupils' good behaviour contributes well to their learning.
Personal development and relationships.	Good. Pupils have good relationships with each other and their teachers. They respond well to opportunities to take on responsibility.
Attendance	Satisfactory overall. However, there are a significant minority of families who continue to take holidays in term-time and this adversely affects the figures.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Reception	Years 1 – 2
Quality of teaching	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.

The quality of teaching is good overall and leads to good learning for all pupils, but particularly those with SEN. There is a good level of consistency in teaching across the school and examples of good teaching

were seen in each class. Teaching in English and mathematics is good and literacy and numeracy are well taught. The main strengths in the teaching are good subject knowledge, effective teaching methods that engage pupils and tasks that are well matched to the needs of all pupils, including those with special educational needs, English as an additional language and high attainers. Teachers make effective use of questioning to challenge pupils and extend their learning. They very effectively deploy learning support assistants who give valuable support in lessons. Pupils show high levels of concentration, are eager to answer questions and keen to be involved. As a result, they make good gains in their learning. Teachers set targets for pupils in English and mathematics and ensure pupils are clear about what they need to do to improve. Good use is made of homework to consolidate learning. Homework for pupils with SEN is very good and they enjoy the challenge it provides.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. The school provides a good range of learning opportunities. Extra curricular activities are good and contribute well to pupils' personal development. Good use is made of the community to enrich learning.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good. Pupils are very well supported in their learning. Individual education plans are of high quality; the targets are clear and precise and are regularly reviewed to ensure progress.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good. These pupils are well supported and make good progress in learning English. They are well included in all aspects of school life.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good overall. The school promotes this area of provision well through, for example, religious education, visits, golden rules, and visitors from different cultural backgrounds.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good. The school provides a safe and supportive environment in which pupils feel valued. Pupils' academic performance is well monitored.

The school enjoys a very good partnership with parents. They are very supportive.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The headteacher is providing a clear sense of direction. The senior management team and subject co-ordinators are developing their roles well. All staff are committed to continuing improvement.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactory. Statutory requirements are met. Governors are very supportive of the school but need to be more involved in shaping its direction.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. Priorities are clearly identified and there are detailed plans in place to achieve them.

The strategic use of resources	The school has adequate resources, which it uses well to promote learning. Financial planning is good and linked well to the school's priorities. The large budget surplus has been accrued in order to provide a much needed library facility and ICT suite. The principles of best value are applied satisfactorily.
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The school is well staffed. The accommodation is good, but the unsatisfactory siting of the library limits its use. Resources are satisfactory overall. However, some of the books in the library are old and in need of replacement. Induction procedures are good.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like school, behave well and are making good progress. • The school expects the children to work hard and helps them become mature and responsible. • The school is well led and all staff are approachable. • The teaching is good and their children get the right amount of homework. • The school works closely with parents. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The amount of information on their children's progress. • The amount of extra curricular activities.

The inspection team supports the positive views held by parents. With regard to their concerns, inspectors judge that the information on pupils' progress is good overall. They are informed about their child's targets and have regular opportunities to talk with teachers about their children's progress. Parents of children with special educational needs are regularly informed through termly reviews. Annual reports are satisfactory. There is a good range of extra curricular activities.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Attainment on entry to the school is broadly average in all the areas of learning but covers the full range of attainment. The majority of children in the Foundation Stage at the time of the inspection were achieving well due to good teaching and provision. They are on course to meet the early learning goals for all areas of learning with some children exceeding them.
2. In the 2001 National Curriculum tests taken by pupils at the end of Year 2, results were above average in reading and mathematics and average in writing, both nationally and in comparison with similar schools. The proportion of pupils attaining the higher Level 3 in writing was below the national average. Over time, few pupils have attained at the higher Level 3 in writing although this was much improved in 2001, being almost in line with the national average. Teacher assessments for science showed that pupils' attainment was average both nationally and when compared with similar schools. Pupils with SEN attained very well in relation to their prior attainment as most reached the expected Level 2 in all subjects tested in 2001, from a fairly low baseline. Taking the three years 1999 to 2001 together, results have been gradually improving in reading and mathematics and have fluctuated in writing. The previous inspection identified that standards were average in reading, writing, mathematics and science by the end of Year 2. There has been a gradual improvement in reading and mathematics since then.
3. Inspection evidence shows that by the end of Year 2, standards are likely to be above average in reading, writing, mathematics and science and pupils are achieving well. Standards are improving in writing because pupils have more opportunities for extended writing tasks in English and they have targets for improving their writing, which are monitored regularly. They are likely to be average for all other subjects and in these pupils achieve satisfactorily. The school has set challenging targets for literacy and numeracy which it is on course to reach. The achievement of pupils with SEN is particularly good due to the very good level of support they receive in class. Pupils with English as an additional language (EAL) achieve in line with their peers as a result of good attention to their language development in class, and regular support from the Ethnic Minority Support Service to ensure they fully understand the tasks set.
4. There are several reasons why pupils achieve well, given their average attainment on entry. The quality of teaching is consistently good, work is well planned and teachers have good subject knowledge. Pupils' progress is tracked closely and teachers use assessment information well to match work to individual needs. Targets are set, both on an individual and year group basis and these are rigorously monitored to secure improvement. Results of tests are analysed, weaknesses are identified and action taken to address them.
5. Standards in literacy and numeracy are above average. Teachers have a good knowledge of the national strategies and approach the teaching of skills systematically. Planning is detailed ensuring that work is well matched to pupils needs. Teachers use homework well to consolidate pupils' learning. There is a good focus on spelling and handwriting in literacy and on the development of mental strategies in mathematics. Literacy and numeracy have a satisfactory profile across the school but both of these could be developed further through other subjects.
6. The majority of pupils with SEN are making very good progress against the targets set for them in literacy and numeracy. Progress is very carefully monitored by the co-ordinator for special educational needs. Very good use is made of interesting homework, which pupils enjoy, consolidating learning. LSAs provide very good support for pupils in lessons ensuring they understand tasks and helping them with any problems they encounter and this helps significantly in promoting learning.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

7. Pupils have a good attitude to their schooling. They are happy coming to school, with even the youngest leaving their parents without a fuss. Some pupils arrive at school running and skipping to get there. Once inside they go straight to their classrooms ready and prepared to start work. Right from the start of the school day, they have a good approach to their lessons and learning. Most parents believe that their children like coming to school and the children themselves confirm this view.
8. Children in the reception classes feel safe and secure in school. They behave very well and have a positive attitude to their work. They know classroom routines and co-operate well with each other in carrying them out. They take turns and share resources, and are able to tidy them away at the end of a session. For example, in the playground, they do not often squabble over the wheeled toys, and sometimes go round together on them as a group. They are proud of their work; happily showing adults their pictures made from buttons and beads. They have pleasant relationships with each other, and are usually kind and considerate to those working alongside them. They try hard and want to please the class teachers.
9. Older pupils' attitudes are also positive. This is encouraged by the good quality of teaching experienced by pupils in most lessons and contributes significantly towards their learning. Pupils are attentive and keen to learn. During well-taught lessons they sustain interest in their studies and are keen to participate through asking and answering questions and applying what they have learnt to new situations. For example, in a Year 2 geography lesson, they got on with their work creating their own symbols for different features and were then keen to apply them in designing their own island. Pupils are proud of their work and are keen to share their successes with adults in the room and receive recognition and praise. Even where teaching is less good, pupils still respond and participate in a satisfactory manner. The level of support received by pupils with special educational needs contributes well to the way they participate in class work and are fully included.
10. Parents believe that their children behave well in school. Pupils do behave well and are aware of the school's expectations of them. This means that teachers do not spend too much time in lessons maintaining order and can use the available time productively to further pupils' learning. For example, in a Year 1 literacy lesson, the rest of the class got on with their work constructing sentences with the word "went" in them whilst the teacher worked with a group of readers. Pupils behave well at break time and lunchtime, the two playgrounds being unthreatening environments. Within them the school provides worthwhile activities for the pupils and this encourages good behaviour, as does the active involvement of the adults supervising them. Bullying was not raised as an issue by pupils or parents and none was seen during the inspection; it is a rare occurrence in the school. Other oppressive behaviour is also a rarity. There have been no exclusions from the school in the past year. The school places considerable emphasis on how pupils are expected to treat other people and they are very good at putting these values into practice. This does not always come naturally to them and their success is a reflection of the effective work of the school in establishing these values. Pupils speak politely to each other and to adults. They value each other as individuals and understand the impact of their actions on others. Parents are very satisfied with the school's standards of behaviour and believe that it is successful in helping their children develop good attitudes and values.
11. Pupils' personal development is good. The school is enabling pupils to be confident and self-motivated and to take responsibility for their own learning and actions. As a result, they are polite and confident, despite the fact that many enter the school with underdeveloped social skills. The school provides a number of opportunities for them to take responsibility, and pupils respond well to these. Examples include pupils acting as monitors at playtimes and as special helpers. Pupils are capable of carrying out tasks without needing adults to give them detailed direction, for example, tidying away after a lesson. Their personal confidence is well developed, as shown in a design and technology lesson in Year 1, where a number of pupils planned and produced models incorporating a pivot joint that were quite different from the examples used by the teacher. This shows that they have the confidence to develop their own ideas rather than just copy. Pupils' capacity to reflect

upon their own feelings and discuss their experiences is very well developed for their age. When they are given the opportunity, they are able to assess their own work sensibly and to say what they need to do to improve, a process encouraged by the school's productive use of targets to assist this process. Pupils play together well in the playground, organizing their own games, and they behave well in the dining hall as they eat their meals.

12. Relationships within the school are good and pupils in most classes respect their teacher. Pupils can work well collaboratively with each other in pairs or small groups when called upon to do so. They listen and give due regard to the views of others, even when they are different from their own, and are supportive of one another. Pupils are confident enough to relate their own experiences in a very mature and thoughtful way without inhibitions about their classmates' response. In a Year 1 English lesson, they discussed their ideas with the person who happened to be next to them on the carpet; they were able to do this quickly and without fuss. Boys and girls work together unselfconsciously. Pupils look after the school's property, use equipment sensibly and are trusted by teachers to use resources and facilities with minimum levels of supervision. For example, in the same Year 1 design and technology lesson referred to above, they used scissors safely and were able to use sharpened pencils to make holes in card safely.
13. Pupils' attendance is satisfactory. It has been broadly in line with the national average for a school of this type for a number of years, with a level of unauthorised absences that has also been about average. However, a dip in the attendance figures in 2000-2001 means that there is no room for complacency. There are certain individuals who do have unsatisfactory attendance patterns although they are not members of any particular group of pupils. Nine specific pupils have recorded attendance figures below 80% up to November 12th this school year. There is a significant number of family holidays taken in term time and this is one factor in the overall figures. The last inspection report noted that lateness was an issue and that some pupils were arriving very late. This problem has been resolved. Most pupils arrive punctually and do not delay the start of the school day.
14. Standards of pupils' attitudes and behaviour have been maintained since the last inspection of the school and make a significant contribution to pupils' learning.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

15. The school has successfully addressed the aspects of teaching that were key issues at the time of the last inspection. As a result, teaching is now good overall and pupils learn well in lessons. This, in turn, has led to improvements in standards and the good achievement of pupils of all abilities in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. The quality of teaching was good or better in seven out of ten of the lessons seen. It was very good in one in five of lessons. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed. This is a good improvement from the time of the last report, when one in five lessons were judged to be unsatisfactory. Planning and ongoing assessment is good. Teachers have clear learning objectives for all lessons and provide appropriately challenging work for pupils of all abilities. The school is in the process of changing from a subject-based curriculum to a topic-based curriculum. During this transitional period, teachers have made certain that long and medium term plans for the taught term are well structured and the consistency of approach with which teachers implement these across all subjects has ensured Pupils develop their skills steadily and systematically for pupils. Planning for the remainder of the year has been drafted and will be put in place prior to each term.
16. The quality of teaching is good in the Foundation Stage and has been maintained since the previous inspection. Teachers' understanding of how to teach the basic skills and knowledge of children's pattern of development are good. Teachers plan in detail with classroom assistants and all work effectively together as a team to provide a good mix of whole class and small group teaching, based on children's prior attainment. There is a strong emphasis on encouraging independence through the daily 'plan, do, review' sessions where children are largely responsible for initiating their own learning. Teachers manage the children very well, providing a secure and happy environment in which children feel valued and stimulated. They have a clear picture of what children know and can do as a result of their initial assessments and plan their work accordingly. Children are assessed regularly and good use is made of 'focus tasks' to clearly assess children

against specific learning outcomes. For example, adults assess children's skills in using a computer program or their ability to recognise and use terms such as 'longer' or 'shorter'. This very good activity would benefit from being used on a more regular basis to promote literacy and numeracy.

17. Teaching is good across the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. Teaching was also good overall in the lessons seen in information and communication technology, history, music, physical education and religious education. Since the previous report, the quality of teaching in all these subjects has improved, from being generally satisfactory, to good. In science and information and communication technology (ICT) teaching was judged to range from unsatisfactory to good. It is now good. The teaching of music ranged from poor to very good and is now good. The good teaching of history has been maintained. The consistent picture of good teaching makes a key contribution to the good achievement of pupils in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science as well as in physical education. Not enough lessons were observed to make judgements on the teaching of art and design, design and technology and geography.
18. The teaching of basic literacy and numeracy skills is good, helping pupils to achieve well and to make good progress in many lessons. One reason for this is that teachers have worked hard to implement the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies consistently, helped by good guidance from the co-ordinators and by making good use of external training. Other reasons include the very effective support given to pupils with SEN and the good support given to pupils for whom English is an additional language (EAL). Sound use is made of opportunities across the curriculum to extend the range of pupils' writing, although the teaching of new vocabulary is not sufficiently structured. Satisfactory use is made of the teaching of numeracy in other subjects, although teachers do not make enough use of planned opportunities to do this.
19. The quality of teaching, for pupils with SEN is very good and leads to very good learning.. The learning support assistants have clearly identified roles and areas of responsibility. They provide very good support for individuals and groups of pupils and liaise very closely with the teachers
20. The quality of teaching for pupils for whom English is an additional language is good. They are well supported in lessons by their class teacher and learning support assistant. Additionally, they receive regular support from the Ethnic Minority Support Service to ensure they fully understand the tasks set.
21. In many lessons, there are strong features that contribute to the positive attitudes pupils have to their learning. Teaching in seven out of ten lessons is good. In these lessons, teachers manage their pupils in a consistent and positive way. This is based on the good relationships between all staff and pupils throughout the school. Teachers help pupils to meet their good expectations of behaviour and attitudes to work by creating a secure and purposeful atmosphere in lessons. They are good at adapting their style of teaching to the particular needs of the pupils by using a good variety of enjoyable activities. They have a thorough knowledge of individual pupils that they use sensitively to support them and promote their self-esteem. They listen to and value pupils' ideas, helping them to develop their confidence in expressing them. It means that all pupils are keen to share their ideas.
22. Other good features include the way that teachers work well together as a team and plan together. They brief and deploy their learning support assistants well, so that their skilled support has a very positive impact on pupils' learning. Many examples were seen of teachers using good subject knowledge well in effective questioning to both consolidate and extend pupils' learning and to ensure that boys and girls were equally involved. Teachers are careful to choose resources and contexts for learning that are relevant to all of the pupils and arouse their interest. In many lessons, they use a good range of strategies to keep up a brisk pace and sense of urgency, by using time targets effectively. As a result, pupils listen well and work hard.
23. In two out of ten lessons, teaching is very good. This is exemplified by teachers' very good subject knowledge and excellent planning, which clearly builds on previous work. Very good use of assessment data supports pupils of all abilities and very good questioning moves the pupils on at

a fast pace. Teachers make very good use of time and use the end of lesson recap session effectively to assess pupils' understanding of the lesson objectives and to review and clarify any errors and misconceptions made by pupils. In these lessons, the teachers began by sharing the objectives clearly both orally and by using the school's system of displaying the objectives in a 'We Are Learning To' (WALT) speech bubble. They then referred back to the speech bubble at the end of the lesson, so that pupils could review how well they were doing.

24. The impact of such features on pupils' rate of learning was illustrated in a very well taught lesson for Year 2 pupils, using poems about schools. Very good questioning by the teacher developed pupils' understanding of rules of rhyme by associating words about school, for example "chalk and talk", "rule and school", "letter and better". Good use was also made of the computer to support pupils' understanding of words with "oi" and "oy". This resulted in pupils of all abilities making very good gains in their learning during the lesson. In a very good Year 1 mathematics lesson, the teacher used the introductory mental session very well to build on pupils' prior knowledge. Through skilful questioning, she quickly moved on from counting on in twos and tens to place value work using mental games, such as "I am thinking of a number, it is one less than six" to using work cards and dice for doubling numbers up to twenty-four. Pupils were very well motivated and interested by the teacher's clear and lively explanations and completely absorbed in the well-matched and interesting tasks.
25. There were some elements of teaching, where examples of good or very good practice were seen, but where there was some inconsistency between teachers. These made the difference between good and very good teaching and satisfactory lessons. In some lessons, teachers allow pupils to shout out answers at inappropriate moments. In other lessons, although teachers had clear objectives in their planning, they did not share these effectively with pupils. By contrast, in some very well taught lessons, the teacher not only discussed the objectives with pupils, so they knew exactly what they should be learning, they also encouraged pupils to evaluate their work against them at the end of the lesson. Key vocabulary is not always stressed in subjects, which limits opportunities for pupils to consolidate and use it effectively. End of lesson recap sessions are sometimes used well to help pupils not only review, but to extend what they have learnt and also to set the context for what they will learn next. All teachers plan opportunities to use ICT to support pupils' learning in other subjects. However, the impact on pupils' learning varies to some extent with teachers' own level of skills and confidence and the amount of time pupils are encouraged to use the computers, although there has been an improvement in this since the last inspection, as a result of staff training.
26. Teachers plan in year groups and this ensures that pupils in each class have similar opportunities and experiences. Teachers also make good use of the ongoing assessments of pupils' work and responses, especially in English and mathematics. Several good examples were seen during the inspection week of teachers adjusting lesson plans to take account of pupils' responses and level of understanding in the previous lesson. For example, at the end of a very good Year 2 mathematics lesson, about whether the order of two numbers to be multiplied made a difference to the answer, the teacher shared with the pupils that more time was needed on the activity as it was not fully understood by all. As a result, the next day's lesson would not be as planned but would continue with the present activity. The good use of assessment and topic evaluations also result in teachers matching activities well to the needs of pupils of differing abilities, thus ensuring all are included. This has contributed to the good progress pupils now make in many lessons. Good use is made of regular homework, especially in English and mathematics, to support class activities. A very good homework book has been produced for mathematics, which shows the targets that pupils are being asked to meet, the dates when the targets are met and the homework activities being set to meet the targets.

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

27. The school provides its pupils with a wide range of good quality learning opportunities that have been improved since the time of the last inspection. It has a suitably broad and balanced curriculum, which meets the interest, aptitudes, special educational needs and additional language needs of all pupils and prepares them well for the next stage of education. Statutory requirements are met in all subjects, including religious education, collective worship, sex education and personal, social and health education. Good use is made of visitors to the school and visits in the locality. Such activities add interest and relevance to pupils' learning, contributing to their positive attitudes and personal development.
28. The previous inspection report noted that ICT did not comply with National Curriculum requirements and also that there was a need to review and monitor the time allocated to each subject. Both of these issues have been successfully addressed. The curriculum co-ordinator has monitored carefully the time allocated to each subject during each term and over the year to ensure a broad and balanced curriculum.. The amount of time some pupils have of actual 'hands on' experience on computers is low in some classes. Although pupils' attainment is in line with expectations, they are only making satisfactory progress. The use of extra and discretionary time is used well to improve the pupils' basic skills in literacy, to teach personal, social and health education (PSHE) and to promote the good use of visits and visitors to the school.
29. The quality and range of learning opportunities for children in the Foundation Stage are good. Work is planned across all areas of learning and there is good provision for regular outdoor activity and the development of independence and initiative through daily 'plan, do, review' sessions
30. Teachers place a good emphasis on the basic skills of literacy and numeracy. Good use is made of the National Literacy Strategy and National Numeracy Strategy, both of which are having a good impact on the raising of standards. At the time of the previous inspection the school was judged to be 'working hard' to 'implement a more appropriate curriculum' through a topic work approach. With the introduction of national guidance for all subjects, the school began to change from a topic-based curriculum towards a subject specific curriculum. After careful review, it was decided that this was restricting the quality and range of the curriculum and teachers' methods of teaching. In September 2001, the school moved back to a topic-based curriculum for all subjects except English and mathematics. All staff have ensured that the transition has been a smooth one and that pupils do not repeat work in the period of change. The curriculum co-ordinator has managed the change well, with the good support of subject co-ordinators and teaching staff.
31. Long-term and medium-term planning is good for literacy and numeracy and satisfactory overall for all other subjects. The school has taken good aspects of nationally approved guidance, and previous school planning, to develop topic-based plans; for example on the theme of 'Toys', 'Colour' and 'Autumn'. Schemes of work are in place for this term, with clearly defined learning objectives and outcomes but they are still in draft form for the remainder of the year. The scheme for religious education is in accordance with the locally agreed syllabus for Medway and national guidance. The school makes satisfactory provision for PSHE, sex and drugs education. These aspects are addressed appropriately across areas of the curriculum, through the topics, and in science. For example, pupils learn about, feelings, keeping healthy and growing up. A parent brings a baby to school, which promotes discussion. The school has recently introduced 'circle time', which is an opportunity for pupils to sit in a circle and talk about issues important to them. This has a positive impact on their personal development
32. Equality of opportunities in the curriculum is good. The school gives good attention to ensuring that the curriculum is accessible to all pupils regardless of their gender, race, background or ability. The school is committed to inclusion for all. No pupils are disadvantaged.

33. The provision for pupils with EAL is good. Good support is given by teachers, LSAs and the support assistant from the Ethnic Minority Support Service, to ensure that pupils fully understand the tasks set. As a result, they make good progress.
34. The provision for pupils with SEN is very good. Most pupils are making very good progress in English and mathematics, when measured against their prior knowledge and understanding of these subjects. In the majority of classes, the curriculum is planned very carefully and takes due account of pupils' learning difficulties. The school is implementing the Code of Practice very well and pupils' individual education plans are of a very high quality. The targets are effectively used to track and review progress on a regular basis.
35. The enrichment of the curriculum by first hand enquiry, educational visits and visitors to the school is good. However, pupils' use of the school library for personal research is under-developed. The local environment is used well to support different subject areas of the curriculum. For example, pupils visit the local shops and post office, Rochester Cathedral, the Guildhall museum and a falconry centre.
36. Links with the community are good. For example, pupils visit the local church as part of their religious education work. The community police officer, the school nurse and members of the local fire brigade visit the school to talk to pupils. A Hindu parent and a teacher from the Ethnic Minority Support Service talk to Year 2 pupils about Hinduism and Diwali. The RSPCA talks to pupils about caring for animals. An annual visit is made to the local sports centre. Groups of pupils visit a local home for senior citizens. A dental hygienist talks to Year 2 pupils and theatre groups have performed the story of Hansel and Gretel and a play with a science theme about a snowman. All these opportunities have a positive impact on pupils' personal development
37. The provision for extra-curricular activities is good. A fifth of parents who returned the pre-inspection questionnaire felt that the school does not provide sufficient extra-curricular activities. Inspection findings are that the school provides a good range; for example, three recorder clubs, a gymnastics club and a French club.
38. Good links have been established with partner institutions. During the pupils' final half term in Year 2, they regularly visit the junior school and work with Year 3 pupils. Year 3 pupils also visit the infant school to work alongside pupils in Year 2. This leads to a very smooth transition for pupils from the infant school to the junior school. Good links have been established with local nursery and pre-school groups and with the teacher training institution at Canterbury. Student teachers spoken to during the inspection week felt well supported by the school. The school gives good support to secondary school pupils on work experience through a business partnership initiative.
39. The provision for pupils' personal, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Provision for moral and social development has been maintained since the last inspection, while provision for spiritual and cultural development has improved
40. Provision for spiritual development is good. The assemblies observed during the inspection were very spiritual occasions and of a high quality. Pupils were provided with opportunities to reflect, for example, on the reasons for fasting. They were also encouraged to close their eyes and reflect on the images conjured up by Beethoven's 'Moonlight Sonata'. The school meets statutory requirements for a daily collective act of worship and assemblies are well planned. Religious education, music, art and design, dance and personal and social education lessons provide good opportunities for moments of reflection.
41. Provision for moral development is good. Pupils are developing an understanding of the needs of others. They appreciate the work of charities and their own contribution to fund raising for them. For example, the pupils carried out a variety of activities to raise money on Red Nose day. They learn what is acceptable behaviour as the school has developed clear expectations regarding this. The school rules are enforced through the behaviour code; for example, the issuing of yellow and then red cards, the use of 'Golden Time' and the high expectations of teachers and support staff.

Assemblies are effectively used to teach pupils the difference between right and wrong; moral values are reinforced by staff, who are good role models for the pupils.

42. Provision for social development is good and is supported well through the good relationships between adults and pupils. Pupils are helpful and supportive of each other; for example, they share materials, help each other and work well together. Other good examples of social development are the collaborative work in pairs or small groups, the special helpers in each class, who are given specific responsibilities such as taking registers to the office, and the reading partners. Social development is fostered well in the reception classes through opportunities for children to take responsibility for their actions and learning. During the inspection, for example, children were involved in 'circle time', telling the others and their teacher how they would use their early morning time. Some chose to play in the Millennium Garden whilst others opted to work creatively inside.
43. The provision for pupils' cultural development is good. Pupils learn about their own culture through language, art and design, religious education, music and geography. For example, pupils visit the Guildhall museum as part of their history studies and Rochester Cathedral as part of their work in religious education. Music is appropriately used in assemblies and pupils are becoming familiar with composers and their music. Since the last inspection, multicultural aspects of the school's curriculum have improved significantly. Assemblies and religious education lessons are effectively used to teach pupils about different beliefs. During the inspection, a very good example was observed; the headteacher, taking assembly, made comparisons between Christianity and the Muslim faiths. She likened the Bible to the Qua'ran; the pupils were visibly moved as she washed her hands before handling the holy book and showing it to them. The displays in the hall and classrooms support religious festivals such as Hanukkah, Diwali, Easter, Moon and Remembrance. Visits from a Hindu parent, to talk about Diwali, a Hindu music workshop and the use of the Internet to visit a virtual synagogue are all examples of the improved multicultural dimension in the school.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

44. The school provides a good, caring and supportive environment in which pupils can feel safe and valued. This is effective in helping to raise pupils' overall achievement and ensures that the school is successful in including all pupils in its provision. From the headteacher and senior staff downwards, staff make considerable efforts to address the welfare of individual pupils when they need it. Procedures for child protection and for ensuring pupils' welfare are effective. The headteacher has received appropriate training, although she intends to attend another course in order to remain abreast of current best practice, and has appropriate liaison with the local social services department. When the school has pupils on the 'at risk' register they are supported sensitively in school, with individual members of staff given the information they need to be effective, both in these cases and when there are less formal causes for concern. Appropriate records on individual pupils are kept. All staff have been made aware of their child protection responsibilities. Pupils are helped to take responsibility for their own safety through the provision for their personal and social development. Outside visitors such as the police and the school nurse are used to reinforce the message. The school has routine health and safety procedures and testing in place and provides a safe environment. There is a satisfactory health and safety policy in place, whilst the governors and management are fully involved in monitoring the site. The caretaker is active in ensuring the school provides a safe working environment for staff and pupils. The school is aware of the need to consolidate its practices by carrying out formal risk assessments of the site and working practices and recording the results; this should be done as soon as possible. No unsafe practice was seen in lessons during the inspection. The health and safety shortcomings noted in the last inspection report have all been corrected.
45. The school has effective procedures to monitor attendance and encourage pupils to attend regularly. There were two key issues related to attendance at the time of the last inspection; one was to improve the monitoring of attendance, the other to ensure that attendance registers met legal requirements. Attendance registers are completed efficiently and the results analysed using the school's computer system. Following the last inspection of the school, a new attendance policy has been drawn up and implemented. There are now good systems in place to identify and

follow up attendance problems, involving the educational welfare officer as necessary. The school has also established its expectations with parents more firmly. The computerised attendance records are properly completed and the formal legal documents – the official computer printouts – are kept properly. The school attendance procedures fully comply with legal requirements.

46. The school's procedures to monitor and promote behaviour are good. The school has a behaviour policy, which includes provision for rewards and sanctions. There is an effective approach to bullying if incidents occur and appropriate records of these and other incidents are kept. The school has recently adopted the use of 'Golden Time' as a positive approach to improving behaviour and helping pupils be responsible for their own actions; this is successful.
47. The school makes good provision for the personal support and guidance of pupils. The mission statement emphasizes the aim to develop pupils' independence by creating a happy and secure environment. Support starts before a child joins the school, when an initial meeting between the class teacher and the parent and child is used to start determining needs. The school encourages parents to sign the home-school agreement and many do so, although it is hard to ascertain any identifiable benefits as a result. In the reception classes children are responding well to the school's introduction of daily 'plan, do, review' sessions to develop their decision-making and social skills. This is also starting to contribute to children's understanding of their own learning. Teachers throughout the school know their pupils well. Although there is some formal record keeping, monitoring of pupils' personal development is largely informal, with all pupils known to their class teacher. Teachers treat pupils as individuals. Sharing Assemblies are used to celebrate pupils' achievements in and out of school. Staff are good at managing pupils with particular social needs and the school's approach to inclusion is effective. The whole school culture is based on all staff feeling responsibility for the pupils. Formal provision in Years 1 and 2 includes personal and social development, largely taught through circle times. Staff are encouraged to deal with them in ways that meet their specific needs. The LSAs provide a major contribution to the personal development of pupils, often being able to provide useful support to small groups or even individuals. For example, in the reception classes, the LSAs ensure that all children are involved with others in activities and are not isolated. Lunchtime supervisors are also active in ensuring that the hour and a quarter lunch break is used as effectively as possible, encouraging pupils to play together rather than get bored, and ensuring that all are included in activities. Staff try to find ways to make pupils feel good about themselves.
48. The procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' academic progress are good overall, and have been maintained since the previous report. Procedures for assessing pupils' achievement and progress in English and mathematics are very good. Pupils' understanding at the end of a topic or theme is assessed well. In science, the procedures are good. In all other subjects the procedures are satisfactory. In English and mathematics very good use is made by teachers of daily assessment, against the specific learning objectives of a lesson, to inform their planning and to match work to the different ability groups within a class. Assessment is also used very well to set specific individual targets for pupils, which are regularly monitored and reassessed. These targets are shared with pupils and put in the front of their English and mathematics books so that they can refer to them. They are also shared with parents at the termly parent-teacher consultation meetings, in the pupils' homework books and on the annual reports to parents. The school is now developing the same very good procedures for science. In all other subjects teachers assess pupils' understanding at the end of a topic and record their understanding against the lesson objectives on a class assessment sheet, which is used in all classes. Teachers also give written feedback to subject co-ordinators about pupils who have achieved particularly well, or need further support, in any aspect of a topic.
49. The marking of pupils' work is generally good. It evaluates the strengths and weaknesses in pupils' work or sets individual targets for the future. However, the quality of the written evaluative comments in pupils' books varies from class to class.
50. The use of data provided by the local education authority to analyse national, local and school results in English, mathematics and science is good. The headteacher, senior management team and co-ordinators also analyse the results of pupils by gender, age and background. Good use is

made of the information to identify any pupils or groups of pupils who are not making the expected progress. Appropriate support is then provided through, for example, additional support in class or individual programmes of work. Good use is also made of the information to identify areas of strengths and relative weaknesses in subjects. For example, the school has identified that in reading girls out perform boys, in mathematics problem solving is a relative weakness and, in science pupils need to further develop their use of scientific enquiry. This leads to an effective adjustment being made to the curriculum in order to raise standards. In the past year, the school has begun to use a computer program for tracking pupils' attainment in the different aspects of English and mathematics. This is also being used to identify specific groups of pupils and individuals so as to raise their attainment.

51. The identification and assessment procedures for pupils with special educational needs are very good. Pupils having learning needs are identified early and parents are contacted whenever the school has any concerns. Their records are very detailed and well kept. The school receives effective help from outside agencies such as the learning support and psychological services.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

52. The parents who took the opportunity of expressing their views of the school through the parents' questionnaire or the parents' meeting were very pleased with the school's provision. A very high proportion of parents are pleased with the quality and effectiveness of the education the school provides for their children. They believe that their children like school, make good progress, are helped to become mature and behave well at school. They think the teaching is good, with staff having high expectations of the pupils, and that they set the right amount of homework. Parents generally think that the school works well with them. They believe the school is well led. A small minority of parents expressed reservations about the ways the school keeps them informed about the children's progress and the level of extra curricular activities. Inspection findings do not support these reservations. Overall, parents' views of the school are very good. The school is popular and has the confidence of its local community.
53. The school has effective links with parents. These start before a child joins the school, with the class teacher meeting the child and parents, and this level of commitment to good links is maintained once the child has joined the school. The school operates an open door policy and the headteacher and class teachers are available to meet parents to discuss any problems or issues. In the Foundation Stage, parents are invited into school once a week to share story time with the children and, in addition, there are open afternoon sessions for parents to celebrate children's work. There are formal opportunities to meet teachers to discuss progress each term. The annual written reports on pupils' progress are good documents, which relate progress to early learning goals or National Curriculum as relevant. They contain good information on curricular coverage and three personal targets, but could say more about what the pupil can do in relation to National Curriculum targets. The teachers' comments on personal development are often perceptive and personal to the individual. Class teachers send out letters at the start of term on the curriculum to be covered, and there are regular newsletters and other communications to keep parents informed about the life of the school. The prospectus and the governors' annual report are both satisfactory documents providing useful information about the school. Parents of pupils with special needs are fully involved in the review process and contribute to Individual Education Plans. There were several criticisms of the information to parents at the time of the last inspection of the school; these issues have since been successfully resolved.
54. Parents' contribution to children's learning at school and at home is satisfactory. Many parents support their children by hearing them read at home or by getting involved with their homework. There is a useful home-school contact book in which parents can write comments or questions. A limited number of parents help in school, usually hearing readers. Some have come into school to talk to pupils about their specific experiences. The formal school parent teacher association, which was strong at the time of the last inspection, has since folded through lack of support. The quality of the information to parents has improved since the last inspection, whilst the parents' contribution has been maintained.

55. The school works hard to ensure that parents of pupils with special educational needs are fully informed and makes every effort to involve them in the review of individual education plans.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

56. Overall the leadership offered by the headteacher and management team is good. The headteacher provides clear educational direction and the commitment she shows to the inclusion of all pupils strongly contributes to the good ethos of the school. This is a good improvement since the previous inspection. All issues raised at that time have been dealt with effectively. The senior management team is a fairly new initiative but is developing its role well in setting the strategic direction of the school. For example, the school was not satisfied with its curricular provision and a decision was taken at management level to make significant changes, which have been implemented well by all staff. The deputy headteacher played a significant role in this process. The subject co-ordinators are developing their roles and core subject co-ordinators have been involved in monitoring their subjects through classroom observations, monitoring of plans and analysis of statistical data. This has enabled them to bring about improvements in their subjects.
57. The management of the special educational needs provision is very good. The headteacher and the leading learning support assistant ensure that the Code of Practice procedures are carefully followed. The funding received by the school, for identified pupils, is very well spent. The majority of the money is used to fund learning support staff who provide very good value for money. The school has already made a good start on revising their documentation and procedures to conform with the new Code of Practice. Statutory requirements for the two pupils with a statement of special educational need, are fully met.
58. All staff share a commitment to raising standards still further and are developing a good understanding of the areas for development in their subjects. Targets have been set, clear actions have been identified and good improvements are already showing in test results. A good programme to cover monitoring of all subjects of the curriculum is currently being set up and this should ensure developments in all subjects take place on a regular basis.
59. The headteacher and senior management staff monitor the curricular provision and quality of teaching through a variety of means. Teachers' planning is scrutinised to ensure the curriculum is appropriately covered and classroom observations are undertaken in order to assess the quality of teaching. The Local Education Authority (LEA) has been involved in this process in order to validate judgements on the quality of teaching.
60. There are several reasons why the school is effective. There is consistently good quality teaching across the school, provision in the Foundation Stage is very clearly focused on the development of initiative and independence as well as academic standards. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 are targeted in English and mathematics to secure improvements. Lessons are well matched to the differing needs of pupils, including higher attainers and those with EAL and SEN. Pupils of all abilities make good gains in their learning as a result. Good tracking procedures show that pupils of all abilities reach, and sometime exceed, the targets set for them, based on their attainment when they start school. The school evaluates its performance well.
61. The governing body fulfils its statutory responsibilities satisfactorily. They are very supportive of the work of the school and have a sound understanding of their roles. They are involved in the work of the school through their committees, their involvement in the school development plan and their regular attendance at governors meetings. However, currently their role is a fairly passive one. They need to be more proactive in identifying the school's strengths and weaknesses and in shaping its direction. Currently they rely too heavily on the headteacher and her staff for this information.
62. The school has a full complement of teaching staff. Their qualifications are well matched to their responsibilities and expertise. The learning support assistants work closely with the teachers and provide very effective support to pupils with additional learning needs. Procedures for the induction of new staff are good. There is a useful staff handbook that contains essential information about the school's aims and procedures. Newly qualified teachers have a mentor and are well supported

during their first year of teaching. Good opportunities are provided for training. An example of the effectiveness of the training and induction procedures can be seen in the wide range of expertise amongst the learning support assistants. Many have additional qualifications in behaviour management, communication, speech and language and supporting literacy and numeracy. The students, working in the school at the time of the inspection, felt that they had been inducted well and were receiving good support.

63. The accommodation in the school is good. The outdoor play space is very good and includes the Millennium Garden. There is a fenced pond and wild area, which are used for science. The resources for learning are good in English, mathematics and physical education; they are satisfactory in all other subjects. The school library is rather small and situated in the hatted accommodation adjacent to the school. It is not very well stocked and many of the books are old and need to be replaced. However, there are plans to build a new library and a suite for ICT.
64. The school makes good use of the resources available to it, including specific grants. The school development plan extends over 3 years and hence there is good longer term planning. Spending is directly related to the requirements of this development plan and competitive tendering is applied whenever possible. This is a good improvement since the last inspection when the development plan was considered to be ineffective. Principles of best value are applied in a satisfactory manner. Financial planning and monitoring are good and support the school's educational priorities well. There has not been a recent local authority audit of the school's budgetary systems. However, the school is paying for external consultants to assist it maintain financial systems and it appears that appropriate financial controls are in place. The school has an above average carry forward of funds, but these are appropriately earmarked for the building of a new library and ICT suite. Performance management procedures are fully in place. Data provided by the LEA allows the school to compare its expenditure with other schools and to use this information to challenge its spending assumptions and assist in setting budgets.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

In order to raise standards and enable pupils to make further progress, the governing body, headteacher and staff as a whole team need to:

(1) Improve standards in writing so that more pupils attain at the higher Level 3 by the end of Year 2, and provide more opportunities for writing across the curriculum by:

- continuing with actions already identified;
- helping pupils to develop their use of interesting and imaginative vocabulary;
- increasing use of technical vocabulary across subjects to develop vocabulary generally;
- providing opportunities to write for different purposes and audiences across the subjects of the curriculum;
- providing more opportunities for pupils to plan and organise their writing.

Paragraphs: 2,25,75,78,79,80,83,104,107

(2) Provide more opportunities for pupils to use computers by:

- ensuring teachers take every opportunity to allow pupils to use computers across the curriculum;
- continuing to develop teachers' confidence in the use of software to support all subjects of the curriculum.

Paragraphs: 25,28,95,100, 104,121

In addition the following less important weaknesses should be considered for inclusion in the action plan :

- improving the quality of books in the library and re-site the library as soon as possible to make it more accessible to pupils;

Paragraphs: 35,63,77

- developing the governors' role to be more proactive in shaping the school's direction.

Paragraph: 62

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	49
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	26

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	10	25	14	0	0	0
Percentage	0	20	71	29	0	0	0

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents more than one percentage point.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	YR – Y2
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	207
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	34

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR – Y2
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	48

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	4

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	15
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	10

Attendance

Authorised absence

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	6.9
National comparative data	5.2

	%
School data	0.4
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 2)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	36	47	83

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	31	31	33
	Girls	45	45	44
	Total	76	76	77
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	92 (79)	92 (82)	93 (93)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	31	33	32
	Girls	45	43	43
	Total	76	76	75
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	92 (77)	92 (90)	90 (82)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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	0
Indian	4
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	203
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Teachers and classes**Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y2**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	9
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	20.7
Average class size	25.9

Education support staff: YR – Y2

Total number of education support staff	12
Total aggregate hours worked per week	246

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2000/2001
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	£
Total income	499564
Total expenditure	470444
Expenditure per pupil	1929
Balance brought forward from previous year	55153
Balance carried forward to next year	84273

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	5
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	4

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	1
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	253
Number of questionnaires returned	69

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	61	38	1	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	51	42	1	0	6
Behaviour in the school is good.	45	49	0	0	6
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	43	48	6	0	3
The teaching is good.	56	41	1	0	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	25	57	10	3	6
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	65	34	1	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	62	33	1	0	3
The school works closely with parents.	32	61	6	1	0
The school is well led and managed.	54	45	0	0	1
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	49	45	1	0	4
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	30	41	16	3	10

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

65. Children's admission to the reception classes is dependent on their age. Children with birthdays between September and February attend full time from September. Children with birthdays between February and August start full time in January. The younger children attend the on-site nursery until they start school full time. Evidence from baseline assessments and inspection evidence shows that attainment on entry is broadly average but covers the full range of attainment.
66. Children receive a good start to school, firmly developing and consolidating their skills. All the areas of learning are catered for through teachers' planning. Children are assessed regularly and good use is made of 'focus tasks' to clearly assess children against specific learning outcomes. For example, adults assess skills in using a computer program or children's ability to recognise and use terms such as 'longer' or 'shorter'. This very good activity would benefit from being used on a more regular basis for literacy and numeracy to enhance learning even further. There is a strong emphasis on encouraging independence through the daily 'plan, do, review' sessions where children are largely responsible for initiating their own learning. Parents are welcomed into school at the start of each day and this helps the children to settle well. Parents are also encouraged to be involved in reading activities at the end of each week. This is a very good opportunity to share and enjoy books together. The teaching is good across the areas of learning and all children, including high attainers and those with SEN, achieve well. By the end of the Foundation Stage, most children are on course to attain the early learning goals in all areas of learning and some will exceed them. This is a similar finding to the previous inspection. Standards and provision have been maintained well.

Personal, social and emotional development

67. Most children are on course to exceed the early learning goals for this area of learning and they achieve well. They are secure in classroom routines and take responsibility for activities such as washing their hands, looking after their own belongings and in their 'plan, do, review' sessions. Most children work and play independently when the teacher or classroom assistants are working with other children. They have good levels of concentration and show confidence and independence within their classroom, for example, when changing for physical education and when putting their coats on to go outside. They are happy to work with each other and are developing good social skills, for example, when riding as a group around the playground or when organising their own football game. There is very little squabbling over equipment and good levels of co-operation on shared tasks. The quality of teaching is good. Class teachers and learning support assistants work hard to promote skills in this area of learning. They are sensitive to children's personal, social and emotional needs and place a high value on encouraging independence, co-operation and consideration of each other.

Communication, language and literacy

68. Most children are on course to attain the early learning goals by the end of the Foundation Stage and some will exceed them. They make sound and sometimes good progress and generally achieve well. Children develop their speaking and listening skills well through role-play in the space ship, opportunities to explain the activities they have chosen to do and through regular opportunities to explain their thinking. For example, when experimenting with ice cubes one child explained the meaning of 'melted'. "Melted means you can't see the ice cubes any more" and another was clear that, "ice cubes are made out of water from the tap, we put them in the freezer and they change into ice cubes". They listen well in story times and are keen to make their own contributions and give their opinions. They enjoy the humour in stories and listen to them with good levels of attention. They have good opportunities to develop their writing skills; most can write their names and all enjoy writing. Good emphasis is placed on the development of reading skills. Children learn to link the sounds of letters to words. They use this knowledge well when reading

their reading books. A few higher attaining children can read simple stories and build three letter words. Most other children point to the words and tell a story to match the pictures. All children handle books carefully and this is reinforced at all times. A good range of books is available and children take these home regularly to share with their parents. Parents give good support to sharing and enjoying books with their children.

69. Teaching is good. Lessons are planned well and the teaching of basic literacy skills is good. Teachers are particularly good at questioning the children to encourage their thinking and develop their speaking skills. They provide good opportunities for them to consolidate their learning in activity time. However, more emphasis needs to be placed on a systematic approach to developing their writing as currently there is no regular assessment of children's progress.

Mathematical development

70. This area of learning is taught well and because of this the children make good progress and most are likely to reach the early learning goals by the end of the Foundation Stage. Activities are carefully chosen and resources used well to ensure children develop secure counting and number skills. For example, they learn to count the number of children in the class by counting round the class circle and use a number line to count back to show how many children are absent. Most children already count to 10 and beyond and with help are learning to count on from a given number. For example, when children were trying to work out how many days were in three weeks, the teacher encouraged them to count on from seven, and then from fourteen. Enjoyable activities such as number rhymes and songs feature frequently, for example, 'Five Currant Buns', in which children exchange their penny for a bun. They are developing their ideas of 'full' and 'empty' and 'longer' and 'shorter' through good measuring activities. For example, they use the water tray well to fill and empty containers and learn to use the terms 'empty' and 'full', correctly. They learn to create repeating patterns in a variety of contexts such as leaf printing. The quality of teaching is good. Teachers ensure they take every opportunity to develop the children's mathematical skills through a variety of interesting and purposeful activities.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

71. Children enter the reception classes with a basic general knowledge. The teachers effectively build on this to help them understand and know more about the world around them. Most children are likely to attain the early learning goals in this area of learning, with a good number exceeding them. Children achieve well as they are given good opportunities to learn about the world around them. They are encouraged to ask and answer questions about why things happen, the ice cube activity being a very good example. The children were predicting what would happen by making sensible guesses about the best places to put the ice cubes in order to keep them frozen or encourage them to melt. The children develop their skills in computer use well; they know how to use the mouse carefully when creating their snowman pictures and respond well to oral commands from a mathematical program to sort shoes by a variety of criteria. They use the sand and water effectively to explore their properties. The teaching is good. It supports the children in investigating their surroundings and encourages them to find out things for themselves. Teachers use questioning very well to encourage children of differing ability to develop their ideas and explain their thinking.

Physical development

72. By the end of the Foundation Stage most children are on course to attain the early learning goals in this area of learning and a good number exceed them. Good access to the school hall and the outside play area are major factors in the good progress children make. The teaching is good and offers appropriate physical challenges. For example, when using the outdoor area they have opportunities to ride wheeled vehicles such as scooters and tricycles and organise their own football games. Most are already able to kick a ball with a good level of skill. They enjoy using the outdoor maze and move along it confidently and with purpose. In lessons in the hall they use space well and persevere in repeating simple actions in order to develop new skills. Most throw and catch bean bags with a good level of skill. Good provision of a wide range of practical activities gives children opportunities to handle tools, construction apparatus and malleable materials. It is

because of good teaching and good provision of resources that children achieve well in this area of learning.

Creative development

73. By the end of the Foundation Stage children attain the early learning goals with a good number exceeding them in this area of learning. Displays shows good opportunities are given to paint, print, observe and draw. Children use computer programs well to make patterns and pictures. They regularly sing songs to support learning across the areas of the curriculum. Through practice, most learn to repeat simple clapping rhythms and learn to clap loudly or quietly in response to the teacher's directions. They particularly enjoy stamping to a basic beat, which is re-enforced by the teacher. They enjoy their music sessions and concentrate very well in order to improve their performance. They have good opportunities for role-play, for example, when using the maze to create a jungle where they are chased by crocodiles or when using the space ship for space travel. They enjoy experimenting with materials, and in one lesson, as a result of good encouragement by the teacher, they found many different ways to place materials on paper to create interesting collages. Good links are made with other areas of learning, for example, leaf prints with a repeated pattern and Rangoli hand patterns. As a result of good teaching and provision children achieve well in this area of learning.

ENGLISH

74. Inspection evidence indicates that standards in reading and writing are above average at the end of Year 2. Pupils, including those with EAL, are achieving well. Pupils with SEN achieve very well as a result of the very good attention they receive. This good achievement reflects the gradual improvements in test results in recent years and an improvement in standards since the previous inspection. The current year has a slightly higher than average number of pupils with SEN and therefore the targets set to improve standards are challenging. However, the school has very good assessment procedures in place, LSAs are very well deployed to support pupils with SEN, teaching is good and sometimes very good so the school is on course to achieve its targets.
75. There are several reasons why standards are improving. The National Literacy Strategy has been implemented well and teaching is good. The school regularly analyses test results in order to identify weaknesses and secure improvement. For example, some of the areas identified have led to an increased focus on teaching sound / letter relationships, additional time for extended writing and individual and year group targets which are regularly monitored to check progress. The main weakness is still standards in writing at the higher Level 3, which could be improved further by the provision of more opportunities to write purposefully across the curriculum, together with a greater emphasis on vocabulary development across the subjects, which pupils are encouraged to use in their writing. Pupils with EAL receive good support and achieve well. Boys do not do as well as girls in English but not significantly so. However, the school has taken action to improve boys' performance by purchasing books, which will appeal to them, and encouraging male role models into school to read with pupils.
76. Standards in speaking and listening are generally average although some examples of above average speaking and listening skills were observed during the inspection. Generally however, teachers do not put enough emphasis on the development of technical vocabulary and do not always ask questions that will further develop pupils' speaking skills. Pupils are given many opportunities to discuss their work in pairs, small group and whole class sessions. They listen well to their teacher and one another and are very attentive in lessons. Higher attaining pupils talk confidently about the books they are reading and can explain their work clearly. Pupils are encouraged to discuss their strategies in mathematics and are given good opportunities to ask and answer questions in religious education. For example, in a Year 2 lesson they had many good questions for their Muslim visitor and in a Year 1 lesson, were keen to talk about things that were special to them.
77. Standards in reading are generally above average. There are several reasons why standards in reading are improving. The school places a strong emphasis on reading through guided reading

sessions, reading at home and the 'reading buddy' system where older pupils are paired with younger ones for joint reading sessions. Pupils have individual targets for their reading which are shared with parents, and class teachers regularly monitor their progress towards these. There is a good range of reading materials to appeal to a wide variety of interests. Year 2 pupils develop their reading skills well and use their understanding of letter sounds to build unknown words. A variety of colour coded material is used and texts are generally well matched to pupils' ability. Higher attaining pupils read with fluency, discussing favourite authors such as John Foster. They read non-fiction texts competently and are able to explain terms such as 'enemy' and 'explosives'. They are familiar with literacy terms such as index, glossary and contents. Lower attaining pupils break down words into syllables and read simple texts competently. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well in developing early reading skills. Pupils have regular timetabled access to the library and use the system well in order to choose books or to research information but make limited use of it for personal research due to its location in a demountable classroom.

78. Standards in writing are above average by the end of Year 2 overall although just about average at the higher Level 3. The school is constantly striving to improve on this; there is a regular extended writing session each week and individual targets for writing. Progress against these targets is monitored regularly and pupils are fully aware of what they need to do to improve. Teachers place good emphasis on spelling and regular spelling homework is given in Year 2 resulting in good spelling standards in written work. Higher attaining pupils consistently use capital letters and full stops in their writing and are developing their ability to write in different styles. Their spelling is good and some use description appropriately in their writing, for example, 'starfish come out of the sea and sparkle', but for most pupils this is underdeveloped. Pupils obviously enjoy writing as they generally produce copious amounts of it of reasonable quality. Average and lower attaining pupils develop their use of punctuation. Most build words using their knowledge of sounds and their sentences, though simple, are correctly sequenced. Pupils with SEN are very well supported by LSAs and write simple sentences with support.
79. Literacy skills are used satisfactorily across the curriculum. For example, in design and technology, pupils write simple evaluations and in science they humorously describe their body's response to the 'Giant Jump' –'hot face, red sweat' 'legs ached', 'puffed out'. ICT makes a satisfactory contribution to the teaching of literacy skills; for example, during the inspection pupils used a CD-ROM to help with their reading and a program to help with their spelling. However, writing could be used more across the curriculum to consolidate writing skills and to develop technical and descriptive vocabulary that would help to improve pupils' own vocabulary and develop the skills needed to reach Level 3.
80. Lessons seen during the inspection ranged from satisfactory to very good, but were good overall. Teachers are confident with the subject and with the National Literacy Strategy, which has been implemented well. In the good and very good lessons, the teachers planned well to ensure the differing learning needs of pupils were catered for well. Very good questioning helped pupils to develop their understanding, use tone of voice well and learn about spelling rules. A very good focus on rhyming words enabled pupils to respond with 'letter', 'better' and 'school', 'rule'. Higher and average attaining pupils quickly saw the pattern of sound. Teachers' warm and friendly approach, coupled with their good use of praise, gives pupils the confidence to have a go. In the few lessons that were satisfactory, the teachers allowed too much interruption and as a result the focus of the teaching was sometimes lost. In some group activities, a high level of noise was tolerated. This made it difficult for all groups to concentrate, but particularly the reading groups, who sometimes could not hear each other above the noise. As a general rule, teachers do not stress the use of key vocabulary in order to widen pupils' usage of it. All teachers take great care to include pupils with SEN and they deploy support staff very well, use a variety of strategies to engage and motivate pupils thus ensuring they make very good progress against the targets set in their individual education plans. Pupils with English as an additional language are catered for well, both by their class teacher and by the weekly sessions given by the Ethnic Minority support assistant. Homework is used effectively to consolidate learning and improve spelling. Plenary sessions are used well to share examples of pupils' work or reinforce the main learning objectives. However, opportunities are sometimes missed to extend pupils ideas through further questioning, and there is not sufficient focus on good use of vocabulary.

81. The co-ordination of the subject over time has been good, leading to gradual improvements in standards. The new co-ordinator has a clear view for the further development of the subject. There is a good range of books, which are efficiently used to support teaching and learning. However, some of the books in the library are old and in need of replacement. Good tracking procedures enables the school to monitor progress well. Teachers plan in year groups, which ensures consistency in pupils' learning and provides good opportunities for staff to share ideas. Monitoring of teaching has taken place and this has led to improvements in practice. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' social development through the opportunities provided for them to work collaboratively

MATHEMATICS

82. Results of the national tests for 2001 show pupils' overall attainment by the age of seven to be above the national average. Results at Level 2 or above were in line with the national average and well above the national average at level 3 or above. This represents an overall gradual improvement on the results for level 2 or above since 2000 and a good improvement on the results at Level 3 and above. Inspection evidence indicates that by the end of Year 2, standards are likely to be above average and that pupils are achieving well. This is an improvement on the judgements of the previous inspection, which found standards to be average. The improvement in attainment following the last inspection can be attributed to better teaching and the introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy. Progress by pupils with special educational needs is very good and good for pupils for whom English is an additional language. No difference was observed in the performance of boys and girls.
83. By the end of Year 2, the majority of pupils can identify odd and even numbers, complete number patterns to 20, count on and back in twos, fives and tens, add and subtract small numbers, mentally add tens and units to make 50. Most pupils add tens and units in written form to 100, identify halves and quarters and have a sound understanding of the place value of tens and units. The higher attaining pupils complete number patterns to one hundred and add and subtract numbers to and from 100. Lower attaining pupils add two or three single digit numbers together and units to tens and units. Higher attaining pupils are developing their personal strategies for mental calculations. However, not all teachers encourage pupils to compare and discuss different strategies and key vocabulary is not always stressed.
84. The use of numeracy and mathematics across the curriculum is sound and is planned for in the school's topics and themes. For example, in Year 2, pupils use a computer program to consolidate number work. In geography, pupils use a floor robot to develop work on plans, which requires an understanding of number and space to program the robot. In religious education, pupils draw symmetrical and repeating patterns in the style of Hindu 'Rangoli' patterns, and in history, pupils draw simple time lines and sort old and new toys by different attributes.
85. In their work on shape, space and measurement, higher attaining pupils tell the time on the hour, quarter hour and half-hour. Most pupils describe common two-dimensional shapes by their mathematical attributes and construct three-dimensional shapes using art straws. They begin to measure accurately in centimetres up to ten centimetres and draw and measure lines up to 20 centimetres which are 'twice as long' as a given line. Lower attaining pupils measure with increased accuracy up to ten centimetres.
86. Due to the inspection being early in the school year, there was only limited evidence of data handling as this was not the objective for this part of the term in the National Numeracy Strategy planning. However, Year 1 pupils were observed sorting old and new toys in history lessons, using a variety of reasons; for example colour, size, shape and texture. In Year 2, pupils use the computer to construct and interpret simple bar charts. For example, pupils use a data-handling program to import pictures about themselves; for example shoe size, eye colour and age, which are then sorted by the program to produce separate bar charts of the different results, so that pupils can compare the information.

87. The quality of teaching is good and has improved well since the previous inspection, when it was judged to be 'satisfactory or better in most lessons but unsatisfactory and poor in some lessons'. The improvement in teaching is a direct result of the implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy, training of teachers and learning support assistants in the teaching of the strategy, very good analysis of assessment data to target individuals and groups of pupils to improve on any relative weaknesses. For example, problem solving has been identified as an area to develop. In past years, the monitoring of teaching and planning by the co-ordinator has also improved teaching. However, as mathematics is not the focus for the school this year, the teaching of mathematics is not currently being monitored although planning still is. Challenging tasks ensure that pupils make good progress in most lessons and that time is very well used. Overall, teachers make good use of questions and discussion to assess and move pupils on to their next stage of learning. Good use is generally made of pupils' errors and misconceptions in discussions. However, in a minority of lessons observed, incorrect answers were not always used as teaching points to develop pupils' understanding. In the majority of lessons, teachers display the objectives for the pupils on the 'We Are Learning To' (WALT) display board. This ensures that pupils have a good understanding of what they are to learn. However, not all teachers use this board as a regular method of sharing the objectives for the lesson and so pupils are not always clear about what they are about to learn and whether they have achieved the objectives at the end of the lesson. Learning support assistants and student teachers are given very good guidance by teachers and give very good support to lower attaining pupils and good support to those pupils for whom English is an additional language. This ensures that all pupils are fully included in the lesson.
88. Pupils' attitudes to learning are good. When given the opportunity, they are not afraid to offer answers and strategies, which may be incorrect. When pupils are encouraged to share their errors and strategies, they learn from their mistakes. Relations between pupils, and between pupils and adults, are good. In a very good Year 2 lesson, many of these elements were used to teach pupils strategies for doubling numbers and adding three numbers together. The teachers' detailed planning and good use of prior assessment meant that work was well matched to each group and individuals. Very good use was made of the learning support assistant and a trainee teacher to support lower attaining pupils and pupils for whom English is an additional language. The objectives were shared at the start of the lesson and recapped at the end. As a result of all these elements, pupils made very good progress in the lesson.
89. The co-ordinator gives good leadership and is clearly aware of the strengths and areas for development for the subject. She is a very good role model for the teaching of mathematics and is a leading mathematics teacher for the Medway area. As a result of good tracking and target setting, she has ensured that the school is on course to meet its targets. She has had the opportunity to observe lessons, to feedback to teachers and to monitor planning and pupil's work, resulting in the consistency of teaching seen during the inspection. Careful analysis is being made of national test results to identify any areas for development and any weaknesses in planning. Long term and medium term planning is good and clearly identifies learning outcomes. Very good procedures are in place for assessing pupils' progress and understanding. The school is systematically assessing all pupils and regularly setting individual targets, which are shared with the pupils and their parents. The subject contributes well to the spiritual and social development of the pupils. Information and communication technology is satisfactorily used to support the subject in most classes. For example, Year 2 pupils use a data handling program to construct and interrogate simple bar graphs about themselves and the class and number programs to develop their understanding of multiplication of two numbers or to look for patterns in numbers. The subject is well resourced. Good use is made of the resources but in some classes number lines on display are not always at touch height for pupils and are obscured by three-dimensional displays which limits their usefulness to pupils. Good use is made of homework to support classroom activities and pupils' individual targets.

SCIENCE

90. Teachers' assessments for seven-year-old pupils in 2001, showed that the attainment of pupils by the end of Year 2 was average. This was disappointing and showed that the higher standards gained in the previous year were not maintained, with too few pupils attaining the higher Level 3 target. This was mainly due to the changes made by the school in the science curriculum, which required time to be embedded and the fact that the focus for the school was on improving the teaching of mathematics.
91. Inspection evidence shows that standards are likely to be above the national average by the end of Year 2. The majority of pupils make good gains in their learning. Those identified as having special educational needs achieve very well and make very good progress as they move through the school.
92. Teaching is good overall. In a good lesson for pupils in Year 1, pupils looked at different materials and predicted which ones were attracted to a magnet and those that were not. The teacher's planning was very good and led on extremely well from previous work about pushes and pulls. The teacher carefully made this link by demonstrating how a magnet cannot only pull objects but also push them away. In answer to good, probing questioning by the teacher, the higher attaining pupils realised that scissors, which were part plastic and part metal, were in both categories. Nearly all the pupils thought that the metal objects in their trays would stick to the magnet. Their investigations proved to them that this was not the case and caused them to change their minds - a good scientific message. The teacher explained that it is the metals containing iron that are magnetic. The higher attaining pupils worked more independently and recorded their predictions accurately in simple form. The lower attainers received extremely good support from the learning support assistants, which helped them to gain a better understanding of scientific vocabulary when learning new words such as 'magnetic' and 'attracted'. In Year 2, pupils extended their knowledge and understanding of circuits through experimentation. They enjoyed the challenge given to them by the teacher; to find out what happened when two bulbs rather than one were placed in a circuit. The higher attaining pupils soon realised that more electricity was required to light two bulbs and added an extra battery. However, when the bulbs did not light they were puzzled for a time, but a clue from the teacher made them realise that they had placed the positive poles together. Good preparation, with resources all to hand, meant that the pupils were able to get on with the experiments and use their time effectively in the lesson. They showed the ability to work sensibly in small groups and treat the equipment with respect. The good subject knowledge and high expectations of the teacher enabled her to give effective help to all pupils so that all made good gains in their learning. In this lesson, by extending their knowledge of electricity. Facilities for science are good; the school has the advantage of a wild garden and fenced pond that is used effectively to teach environmental science.
93. Science is well co-ordinated. Since the last inspection there has been good improvement. The teaching is now consistently good, which is helping to raise standards. The recording of investigations and assessment procedures are now good. Assessment has improved because pupils' progress is more carefully tracked as they move throughout the school. Marking is mostly good; it details what the pupils have understood and therefore helps to inform the next stage of their learning. The scheme of work covers a broad range of work including scientific enquiry, life processes, materials and their properties and physical properties. The scrutiny of pupils' work shows that the teachers' planning has maintained links with other subjects; for example, the work in Year 2 about life cycles linked well with history, comparing families past and present. The use of ICT is improving, but computers are not yet used enough for recording or investigation. However, a good example, in the pupils' work sample, was the use of the Internet to research facts about hibernation. This year the school improvement plan is focusing on developing science and there is a planned visit for Years 1 and 2 to the Science Museum to develop their scientific skills.

ART AND DESIGN

94. Standards in art and design are average and pupil achievement is satisfactory. Standards are similar to those attained at the time of the last inspection. This judgement is based mainly on the scrutiny of pupils' work and conversations with teachers and the subject co-ordinator. Only one lesson was observed during the inspection; it is therefore not possible to make an overall judgement about the quality of teaching. There are a few examples where pupils attain above average standards for example, some of the self-portraits in Year 1 in the style of Van Gogh show good attention to detail.
95. The pupils' work covers the National Curriculum requirements and a satisfactory range of media is used. Sound examples of two and three-dimensional work were seen, such as the salt dough portraits in Year 1 and the masks and clay framed photographs in Year 2. Teachers plan satisfactorily and often link their work to other subjects. The displays of work around the school are good and show how art and design is being used in different subjects. The observational drawings of flowers linked to work about life cycles in science and the sketches of old toys in history are both good illustrations of this. Pupils learn to appreciate the work of great and more contemporary artists; in the main school corridor, the work displayed was in the style of Helen Bradley. Pupils' sketchbooks are used satisfactorily; in some, there are good pencil sketches of fruit showing shadow and different tones.
96. In the lesson observed, pupils were using two primary colours to produce a picture showing different shades of colour. Sound questioning and teacher demonstration enabled the pupils to think carefully about the task and mix colours thoughtfully to produce several different shades. Most pupils displayed an enthusiasm for art and design but some were far too talkative and moved about the room disturbing the concentration of others. Some pupils were using a paint program on the computer to produce firework pictures for Diwali. Teachers are particularly aware of inclusion, in terms of some of the complex language used in the subject; for example, words such as 'tone' and 'line' can easily be confused.
97. Since the last inspection the co-ordination of art and design has improved and is now satisfactory. and some assessment is undertaken at the end of topics to identify those needing support. There are some examples of the use of ICT, but the potential of using computers in art and design has not been fully explored. Areas identified for improvement are assessment and the extension of work using ICT.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

98. Standards in design and technology are average by the end of Year 2. Pupils are achieving satisfactorily. During the inspection, only one lesson was observed so it is therefore not possible to make an overall comment on the teaching of design and technology. The judgement made about standards is based upon the inspection of pupils' work, photographic evidence and discussions with the co-ordinator. Pupils' work covers developing and communicating ideas, working with tools and materials and evaluation. Satisfactory progress has been made since the last inspection.
99. In the Year 1 lesson observed, pupils made models with moving parts. A good briefing by the teacher, referred pupils to their designs, drawn the previous week. As a consequence, pupils were clear that their models should be based on their plans. Pupils making a teddy from card used templates for the body parts, however, most required help in setting out the work. Some cut the small pieces for the arms from the middle of the card and wasted material. The teacher worked effectively making suggestions and helping pupils to improve their designs; for example, one pupil's design of a castle with a drawbridge was clearly not going to work with a pivot joint. The learning support assistant was working very effectively helping a group of lower attainers; they achieved well because of this additional help and support. The majority of pupils understood how a pivot joint works and managed to join their card together using a split pin. This was a sound lesson with good emphasis on the design aspect of the work and health and safety issues when using tools.

100. The co-ordination of design and technology is satisfactory. Since the last inspection, design and evaluation of pupils' work has improved but the school has not yet considered using ICT in the planning process. Each class now has an appropriate set of tools and the resources for control technology have improved. There are good links with other subjects; for example, in science when studying floating and sinking the pupils tested the shapes of boats. They learned how the shape of the bows determines a boat's movement through the water. The school has recognised the need to improve design and technology further and it is a focus for development later this year. Currently there are no portfolios of pupils' work to illustrate standards or provide a valuable resource for teachers. Assessment requires developing more in order to ensure that pupils are offered tasks that are well matched to their needs.

GEOGRAPHY

101. Standards in geography are average by the end of Year 2. The majority of pupils are achieving satisfactorily; including those with special educational needs and English is an additional language.

102. It was only possible to observe one lesson during the inspection. The scrutiny of the pupils' work, discussions with the co-ordinator and an analysis of curricular planning were used to make judgements. Pupils' work in geography covers National Curriculum requirements. The pupils are developing a sound knowledge of their own environment and places farther afield. Recently, pupils in Year 1 have looked at different types of houses, shops and amenities and visited shops and amenities in the local area to further their knowledge. Good use was made of family holidays to develop pupils' knowledge of maps. Pupils located the places they visited on a map of the world.

103. In the Year 2 lesson observed, pupils were learning basic map work skills. The teachers' sound instructions helped them to develop their knowledge of symbols such as grassland and beach. The higher attainers were able to think of appropriate symbols for other features such as bridges. Some pupils did not listen carefully enough and drew pictures on their maps rather than symbols; this resulted in their maps looking like pictures. Strong, well-focused help from the learning support assistant encouraged the lower attaining pupils and they made good gains in their learning in this lesson. The pupils showed the ability to work well together and cleared away properly at the end of the lesson. Overall, pupils showed a keen interest and enjoyment of the subject.

104. The co-ordinator has only held responsibility for this subject since the beginning of the term. Currently, geography is not a priority for development but is a focus in next year's school improvement plan. There has been satisfactory improvement since the last inspection but there is limited use of ICT, for example, there were few digital photographs seen of pupils' visits in the local area. However, a programmable toy has been introduced to teach mapping directions such as north and south. There are good links with other subjects; for example, when pupils went on a walk in the locality they investigated pushes and pulls in the park, which supported their work in science. However, there is limited emphasis on developing writing skills through geography. Currently, no time is allocated for monitoring and insufficient emphasis is placed on assessment to inform planning. However, pupils are assessed against the main learning objectives for each topic and this could usefully be used to plan lessons to more closely meet the needs of all pupils.

HISTORY

105. By the age of seven, standards in history are average. Pupils achieve appropriately. Standards have been maintained since the previous inspection. Pupils recall their work in history lessons and develop a sound understanding of chronology and historical facts. For example, Year 1 pupils draw a time line showing the development of toys. Year 2 pupils order, on a time line, the development of light sources from fire to candle to oil lamp to the electric light bulb. They find information through using books, looking at pictures, handling relevant artefacts or visiting local places of interest. Pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language are fully included. Their work is well matched and they are given very good support by learning support assistants and so make good progress. In the scrutiny of pupils' work, there was little evidence of recorded work. However, when talking to pupils, they have a sound recall of the topics taught.

106. The quality of teaching is good and results in good learning. In a third of lessons, teaching was very good. Teachers have good knowledge of the subject. Pupils have very good attitudes and behave very well in lessons. In a Year 1 lesson observed, about the difference between old and new toys, the teacher used questions well to make the pupils think about differences and similarities between old and new teddy bears and dolls. The lesson began with the pupils being asked to sort the toys by attributes such as colour, style and hard and softness. This resulted in pupils being able to make meaningful and sensible comparisons before the teacher moved the pupils on to think about age as a criterion for sorting. The lesson made a sound contribution to English and speaking and listening. In a very good Year 2 lesson about the life and inventions of Thomas Edison, the teacher provided the pupils with a questionnaire that guided them in their research. For example, "When was he born?" "Where did he live?" "Name two things he invented?" "What is a phonograph?" A small group of pupils were then encouraged to use the Internet to research Thomas Edison's life and inventions whilst the remainder used text books and information sheets downloaded from the Internet. The questionnaire supported pupils well in their research and so they made good progress in the lesson. During the recap session at the end of the lesson, pupils showed a good understanding of who Thomas Edison was and of his many inventions, including the light bulb and the phonograph. At the start of lessons, not all teachers share with the pupils the objectives of the lesson using the 'We Are Learning To' (WALT) to ensure that pupils know what they are going to learn.
107. The co-ordinator is new to the subject and has, as yet, had little impact on its development. The use of ICT to support the subject is satisfactory overall. For example, Year 1 pupils word-process sentences about old toys and label 'clip art' pictures of teddy bears. Year 2 pupils use the Internet for research. The use of the library for research purposes is underdeveloped as is the use of writing to support pupils' work in history. Displays are used well to celebrate and enhance the subject. For example, in the hall there is a colourful display of a time line of the school year. In a Year 2 class there was a poignant display of Remembrance Sunday, with a background of poppies and using photographs and pictures of the learning support assistant's grandfather, who fought in the war. The subject contributes well to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

108. By the age of seven, standards are average and have been maintained since the previous report. Pupils' achievement is sound. They confidently use the mouse to open 'select' from an on-screen menu, edit their work, delete and insert letters and words and print their work. Standards in word-processing are satisfactory. By the end of Year 2, pupils confidently use the Internet for research purposes, using sites opened by the class teacher or school technician.
109. The quality of teaching is good overall. No lessons were less than satisfactory. In a history lesson taught by the co-ordinator for ICT, where pupils were asked to research information from the Internet, the quality of teaching was very good. This represents an improvement since the previous inspection when teaching ranged from unsatisfactory to good. Overall, teachers have sufficiently high expectations in lessons but some still lack confidence in using computers to support the curriculum. During the inspection week, an hourly check of computer use revealed that some teachers use the computers regularly, whilst others used them less often. The previous report judged that pupils were "not getting enough 'hands on' experience". Although computer use has improved, this is still the case in some classes, and is the reason why, over time, pupils are only achieving satisfactorily.
110. Pupils are taught about new programs or skills by a demonstration to the whole class. This gives them a clear understanding of how the program works and the aims of the program. For example, in a Year 1 lesson, the teacher introduced the pupils to the layout of a QWERTY keyboard and the functions of the shift, caps lock, delete, space bar and return keys. Pupils were then selected to demonstrate how to type their names into the computer. The lesson contributed well to literacy and pupils' knowledge of letter sounds and blends, as they sounded out the letters as they typed their names. Groups of pupils were then taken to the small computer suite to practise their typing skills, where they made sound progress, whilst the remainder used a worksheet of a computer keyboard to become more familiar with the layout. In a Year 2 lesson, the teacher introduced the whole class

to an art and design program by demonstrating the functions of the on-screen menu before pupils drew firework pictures as part of their topic on Diwali. The teacher had good knowledge of the program and was able to give a clear demonstration. She used pupils to demonstrate the objectives of the program, although when pupils were demonstrating they often obscured the view of the rest of the class by standing in front of the screen. The generally good teaching results in good progress in lessons by all pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language. Boys and girls display the same good attitudes and the same growing confidence and interest in the subject. They are eager to learn new skills and happy to share these with their classmates. For example, in a very good Year 2 lesson, involving the use of the Internet to research information on Thomas Edison, eight pupils were observed using a web site about his life and work. They confidently helped each other with research skills, reading of the text and clicking on to photographs to find more information. In the summer term, Year 2 pupils use e-mail to communicate with Year 3 pupils in the junior school. The school adheres to the local education authority's guidance on Internet and e-mail use by staff and pupils.

111. Since the previous inspection, the variety of different makes of stand-alone computers has been upgraded to one make of multi-media computers, which use the same operating system. Each class has one computer and printer. Small suites of several computers have been built for each year group, which can be used for group and individual work. The ratio of computers to pupils is similar to most schools. In Year 2, portable word-processors are used confidently by pupils to write simple sentences or stories. The school has employed a part-time technician for ICT. She ensures that computers and printers function well and also teaches small groups of pupils in the suites. She supports the subject well. All staff, including learning support assistants, have been involved in the national training initiative for ICT, which has resulted in greater confidence and improved teaching.
112. Management of the subject by the co-ordinator is good. She is knowledgeable and a good role model for the teaching of ICT. The results of the good management can be seen in the improvements in provision and in overall teacher confidence since the last inspection. Plans are also in place to build a computer suite with 12 multi-media computers and an interactive white board. Work is due to commence in spring 2002. The curriculum is being soundly developed through the school's topic approach. The use of information communication technology to support all areas of the curriculum is satisfactory. Satisfactory planning and displays around the school reflect the use of computers in English, mathematics, science, art and design, history, music and religious education. For example, in the English and history aspect of the Year 1 topic on toys, pupils' use 'clip art' to produce labelled pictures of teddy bears, and word-process simple sentences to describe the toy. Year 2 pupils use a "magic number" program to support numeracy. The subject makes a good contribution to the spiritual, social and cultural development of pupils. Sound use is made of the digital camera to record work. The computer based in the library is underused. The subject is well placed for continued improvement and development.

MUSIC

113. By the end of Year 2, attainment in music is average and pupils achieve satisfactorily. This is a similar finding to that of the previous inspection, however standards are now more consistent across the school.
114. Pupils in Year 1 practise using instruments and work in groups with one pupil conducting whilst the others respond by playing loudly or quietly. They recognise and explore how different instruments can be used, for example, by shaking or tapping them. They play untuned instruments with confidence, rehearse and perform in groups and ultimately perform their work to the rest of the class. By Year 2, pupils explore how sounds can be organised and learn to differentiate between high, middle and low sounds. They write their own tunes, rehearse and then perform them. Most know how to represent sounds with symbols and perform carefully and conscientiously. Through very effective listening pupils increase their ability to discern different pitches. Most use instruments sensibly and sing with some idea of the shape of a melody.

115. The quality of teaching is good; lessons are well planned providing challenge and guidance to pupils. Teachers provide good opportunities for pupils to use instruments in order to practise and improve their performance. In some lessons good use is made of a variety of resources and games in order to promote learning, for example, when pupils were learning to differentiate between high, middle and low sounds. Good use is made of questioning to extend pupils' understanding of sounds and to check their understanding of musical terms. Teachers provide good opportunities for pupils to work collaboratively, for example, in Year 2 pupils worked in groups to write a tune using a three-line stave, practised together and then performed it. However, generally teachers do not promote the use of technical vocabulary sufficiently in lessons or encourage pupils to use it.
116. The provision for music is enhanced through lunchtime recorder clubs and opportunities to play musical instruments and sing in assembly. There are Christmas concerts which give pupils opportunities to develop their repertoire of known songs, to use instruments and perform to an audience.
117. The co-ordinator for music is currently on maternity leave but in accordance with the school's curricular planning has ensured long and medium term planning is in place for the subject. The school makes some use of national guidance but has adapted this to meet the school's needs. Some assessment procedures are in place in order to monitor pupils' progress over time. This, however, is not being used to provide for the differing learning needs of pupils. The subject makes a satisfactory contribution towards pupils' social and cultural development through collaborative activities in the classroom and opportunities to listen to music from different cultures, for example, the Hindu music workshop. The school has an ICT program that enables pupils to compose their own music but this was not seen in practice during the inspection.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

118. By the end of Year 2, standards are average. The majority of pupils achieve appropriately, including those with special educational needs.
119. Teaching is good overall. In the lessons observed, the warm-up sessions were good. The teachers ensured that the pupils utilised the space in the hall effectively when moving around, that they did not bump into others and listened to their instructions. In a very good dance lesson, pupils in Year 1 responded well to the maracas. They slowly increased and decreased their movements in time with the beat; for example, when a very slow rhythm was played many took long, slow strides. The teacher used pupils very well for demonstration purposes, which helped some of the pupils who were having difficulty moving to the rhythm of the music to think carefully about how they could improve their performance. Pupils' listening skills were developed very well as they interpreted the music of the 'Dance of the Flowers'; some moved around as raindrops and the others unfurled as flowers. In Year 2, games skills were being taught. The pupils were learning to pass the ball with their feet and a hockey stick. Good teaching of basic skills enabled the majority of pupils to realise the importance of stopping the ball and looking around before making a pass. A few higher attaining pupils had very well developed skills; for example, they showed good poise when in command of the ball and trapped it comfortably with the side and sole of the foot. Lower attaining pupils found control more difficult as their balance and anticipation was not as good; however, good quality teaching and help from the learning support assistant enabled them to make good progress in the lesson.
120. In a few lessons, pupils chattered too much and wasted time but on the whole they are managed well. Teachers are conscious of the possible dangers in physical education and teach pupils to work safely. Pupils are well trained to get out mats and then put them away at the end of lessons. In several lessons, they showed their ability to work co-operatively in pairs and larger groups. Most pupils change quickly for their lessons and are well dressed. The majority enjoy physical education and listen and respond well to instructions. All pupils have equal opportunity to the curriculum. The pupils with special educational needs are well supported and, as a result, they achieve well. In the lessons observed there were no apparent differences in the performances of boys and girls.

121. The management of physical education is being co-ordinated on a temporary basis. Since the last inspection a sound scheme of work has been introduced. However, the policy is in draft form and further work is required to improve assessment. The use of ICT to record and improve pupils' performance is an area not yet explored by the school, for example; the use of a camcorder to video performance. The facilities and resources for physical education are good.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

122. By the age of seven, standards meet the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus for Medway. Pupils' achievement is sound and standards have been maintained since the previous inspection. Pupils are developing their ability to describe and understand the beliefs and practices of a number of religious traditions, in particular Christianity, Hinduism and Judaism. By the end of Year 2, pupils know key events in the life of Jesus and about the Gods and special people and events in the Christian, Hindu and Jewish religions. They also know about and about special places, such as the church, the temple and the synagogue.

123. The quality of teaching is good and results in good interest and attitudes by pupils. In half of the lessons observed teaching was very good. This represents an improvement since the previous inspection report, when teaching was judged to be satisfactory. Teachers' knowledge of the subject is good and they use pupils' personal experiences and understanding well in order to develop their knowledge and understanding. For example, in a very good Year 1 lesson observed, the teacher developed the idea of symbolism, special people and artefacts in a religious context by showing pupils items that were special to her. The pupils were totally engrossed as she showed photographs of her two children as babies, war medals won by her husband's father and her swimming and gymnastics badges. Pupils identified very well with these items and then talked about their own special belongings, such as a St. Christopher's necklace, photographs of grandparents and good work certificates. The teacher skilfully moved the lesson on to talk about special symbols used in religion, such as a crucifix necklace, a diva lamp and a rosary. The lesson contributed very well to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils. They often cried "ahhh" as an example of something special was mentioned and were given time to close their eyes and reflect on a special place, person or object in their own lives. The lesson ended with a short prayer. In a very good Year 2 lesson, a support teacher from the Ethnic Minority Support Service spoke to the pupils about Diwali and how Hindus and Sikhs celebrate it. She showed her colourful sari, her jewellery and shared spiced and sweet foods with the pupils, as she talked about the meaning and symbolism of Diwali. Pupils' behaviour and interest was excellent as they listened with intense interest. The class teacher interjected at appropriate times to develop what was being said. Her very good use of questions and her responses to pupils' answers resulted in pupils asking very interesting questions such as "Why do some people have ten Gods?" "Why do Christians have one God?" and "Why do we cover our heads in a church or temple?"

124. The curriculum is soundly planned in broad areas of study based on the locally agreed syllabus and national guidance. There is good evidence of a breadth of teaching related to the teaching of the three main religions studied in the school. Opportunities for religious education are also provided through assemblies, topic-linked work and visits to the local church, Rochester Cathedral and a "virtual reality" synagogue on the Internet. Assemblies enable whole school responses to religious themes. During the inspection week the theme was festivals, ceremonies and symbolism, with a specific emphasis on the Hindu festival of Diwali. These were taken by the headteacher who effectively built on the themes each day. She used the assemblies well to talk about the Muslim festivals of Ramadan and Id-ul-Fitr, the Christian festival of Easter, special family festivals such as birthdays and the importance of the Bible, the Torah and the Qua'ran. Each day the stories developed pupils' respect and understanding for each other and others in the community.

125. The headteacher is acting as caretaker co-ordinator for the subject whilst the co-ordinator is on leave. She has maintained the profile of the subject well. The use of information communication technology to support the subject is satisfactory. Pupils use an Internet site to visit a virtual reality synagogue, or use an art and design package to draw pictures of Diwali celebrations. Good use is made of visitors. For example, a parent and a support assistant have spoken to pupils about Diwali.

The use of the school library to support the subject is underdeveloped. Displays in the hall are used well to celebrate religious festivals and beliefs.