

## INSPECTION REPORT

### **ST. MARY'S CE SCHOOL**

Dover, Kent

LEA area: Kent County Council

Unique reference number: 118748

Headteacher: Mrs. E. Waller

Reporting inspector: Shelagh Halley  
8203

Dates of inspection: 8-11<sup>th</sup> May, 2001

Inspection number: 194543

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Junior
School category:	Voluntary Aided
Age range of pupils:	4-11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Laureston Place Dover Kent
Postcode:	CT16 1QX
Telephone number:	01304 206887
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Appropriate authority: Name of chair of governors:	The Governing Body Mr J Paul
Date of previous inspection:	March 1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
8203	Shelagh Halley	Registered inspector	Foundation stage History Geography English as an additional language	What kind of school is it? How high are standards? How well are pupils taught? Leadership and management
9756	Ken Parsons	Lay inspector		Attitudes, behaviour and personal development How well does the school care for pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents Staffing, Accommodation and learning resources
21899	Gillian Lawson	Team inspector	English Design & technology Special educational needs	Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development Assessment
1224	Graham Todd	Team inspector	Science Information and communication technology Physical education	
16548	Don Gwinnett	Team inspector	Mathematics Art Music Equal opportunities	How good are curricular and other learning opportunities?

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

St. Mary's is a Church of England primary school serving the parish of St. Mary the Virgin, although many of the pupils come from other areas of Dover. There are 289 pupils on roll, 150 boys and 139 girls, aged between four and eleven. This is bigger than most other primary schools. There are very few pupils from an ethnic minority background or homes where English is an additional language, and only one is at an early stage of learning the language. The school's register of special educational needs numbers 76, a proportion which is above the national average. There are four pupils with statements of special educational need, a proportion which is below the national average. The needs covered are: dyspraxia, moderate and severe learning, emotional and behavioural, speech and communication, and physical disability. At the time of the inspection, there were 39 children in the foundation stage (reception classes). Children enter these in the year in which they become five. They come with a wide range of abilities which are slightly above the county average, especially in language and literacy, although slightly below in mathematical development, thus making overall attainment on entry broadly in line with the average.

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

St. Mary's is an effective and improving school. It has strong features which outweigh its weaker areas, and had already identified most of these before the inspection. Plans have been made for improvement but these have not yet worked through to the point where they fully affect standards. The school has average costs and gives satisfactory value for money.

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

- Teaches many subjects well, including science at Key Stage 2 and reading; this results in good achievement in these areas.
- Encourages good attitudes and behaviour which contributes to the good quality of pupils' learning.
- Has good provision for pupils with special educational needs which enables them to make good progress.
- Has good provision for children in the foundation stage which prepares them well for their work in the National Curriculum
- Encourages pupils' spiritual, moral and social development well
- Has a very good partnership with parents.

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

- Standards in information and communication technology are below average because the school lacks equipment.
- Standards in geography are below average in Key Stage 2
- The more able pupils are not doing well enough in mathematics and science at Key Stage 1 and in writing.
- Apart from English and mathematics, subjects are not monitored closely or systematically enough

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

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

The school was last inspected in 1997, and the issues identified for development were appropriately addressed in the post-inspection action plan. Standards have been maintained in most subjects and are rising rapidly in design and technology. However, standards in information and communication technology have been kept down by a lack of suitable resources which is to be rectified when the current building programme is completed. There has been significant improvement in provision for pupils with special educational needs and this is now good, enabling these pupils to make good progress. The total daily teaching time in Key Stage 2 has been increased, bringing it into line with the national average. Work on the development of the curriculum has been constrained by recent national initiatives on numeracy and literacy, to which the school has rightly given appropriate emphasis. Systems for monitoring and evaluating the curriculum are only partly in place, with governors developing their role.

The health and safety hazards identified have been dealt with. Overall, improvement has been satisfactory since the last inspection.

## STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1998	1999	2000	2000
English	D	C	C	C
Mathematics	C	D	C	C
Science	E	B	B	A

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

- Children in the foundation stage are likely to exceed the national early learning goals in communication, language and literacy and in their knowledge and understanding of the world. They are well on course to meet most of the goals in mathematical understanding, creative development, physical development and personal and social development.
- At the age of seven, 2000 results were above the national average in reading, in line with it in writing, and below in mathematics. Attainment was depressed because proportionally fewer pupils reached the higher levels, but the school did well with the numbers of pupils who reach what is expected for their age.
- Pupils' standards of attainment at the age of eleven are given in the table above. The school's targets are adequately challenging. Previous targets have been insufficiently challenging for the more able. They were considerably exceeded last year. The general trend of improvement over several years is below the national average – in other words, results are not improving from year to year as quickly as in other schools. This is because of the increasing percentage of pupils with special educational needs.
- In the current year groups, standards in English are in line with the national average in Key Stage 1, and above it in Key Stage 2. Reading and speaking and listening are particular strengths and writing is weaker. Standards in mathematics and science are in line with the national average in both key stages. Standards are average in most other subjects but below average in information and communication technology and in aspects of geography.
- Pupils with special educational needs make good progress, but those with prior higher attainment do not achieve highly enough, because teachers do not set work which is appropriately challenging.



## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils enjoy coming to school and tackle their work with enthusiasm.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Pupils are well behaved in lessons, although there is some boisterous play at times outside.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Pupils are involved in the life of the school. There are good relationships with each other and their teachers.
Attendance	Good. Pupils are punctual and lessons begin and end on time.

- Pupils are keen to come to school in the morning, with even the youngest happy to say goodbye to parents outside the playground.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

- Teaching was very good in 15 percent of lessons seen, satisfactory or better in 98 percent and unsatisfactory in 2 percent.
- The teaching of English and literacy is good overall, and teachers show a good understanding of how to teach the literacy hour. However, the teaching of reading is better than the teaching of writing. Teaching is satisfactory in mathematics and in numeracy throughout the school.
- Teaching is good in science and in design and technology and physical education at Key Stage 2.
- The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good in both English and mathematics, and these pupils make good progress.
- The basics of good teaching are established in the school, and this enables good learning to take place. Lessons are carefully planned in terms of their structure and timing. Good discipline enables learning to take place, and encourages the pupils to work hard at their learning. Any weaknesses in standards in information and communication technology and in geography, and to some extent in science, result from weaknesses in resources and curriculum rather than teaching. However the area of teaching that should be improved is specifically the issue of getting the expectations of the most able right, so that they gain new knowledge and skills.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory, and good at the foundation stage. It is enriched by a programme of visits into and out of school, and by a good range of extra-curricular activities.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Their needs are identified early and the appropriate support provided.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good. Pupils are supported well with individual tuition.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good overall. Pupils' spiritual needs are well addressed in subjects of the curriculum and in acts of collective worship. Moral and social development are good. Pupils have a satisfactory knowledge and appreciation of their own cultural heritage, but there could be more opportunities for the celebration and understanding of other cultures represented in Britain.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school provides a caring and emotionally secure environment for its pupils. There is good support and guidance but the use of assessment is not sufficiently developed.

- Although the statutory curriculum is in place, geography and information and communication technology are not covered in sufficient depth to extend pupils' knowledge and understanding in Key Stage 2. This is partly because of the school's correct response to the national initiatives on literacy and numeracy which reduced the emphasis temporarily on other subjects. This has been addressed but there has not been time yet to affect standards.
- Good assessment procedures are in place and teachers know their pupils well. However, insufficient use is made of the data available to set the right work for higher attainers.
- The school works effectively with very supportive parents to enhance and extend the learning of their children.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Satisfactory. The headteacher, supported by the senior management team and governors, has a clear idea of what she wants the school to do next, and has accurately identified most areas for development. The developments have not yet had time to result in higher standards.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactory. They are knowledgeable and increasingly involved in shaping the direction of the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory. The governors know the strengths and weaknesses of the school and are beginning to take the necessary action. The school is effectively evaluating its performance.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory. The governors make prudent financial decisions and apply the principles of best value when making large purchases and hiring expensive services.

- The school has an adequate number of teachers, ably supported by a well-trained and experienced team of support assistants. Accommodation is adequate and will be greatly enhanced when the new building programme is completed. Resources are adequate for the delivery of the curriculum, with the exception of information and communication technology where new equipment is awaited.
- Although monitoring and evaluation of teaching and provision has improved in the core subjects of English and mathematics, monitoring of science, information and communication technology and non-core subjects is not systematic or regular enough to make an impact on the quality of provision.

#### **PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL**

<b>What pleases parents most</b>	<b>What some parents would like to see improved</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Their children like school</li> <li>• The children make good progress and are expected to work hard</li> <li>• Parents feel comfortable about approaching the school</li> <li>• The school is well led</li> <li>• Teaching is good</li> <li>• Pastoral care of pupils is good</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A few feel homework is not the right amount.</li> <li>• A few want more extra curricular activities</li> </ul>

- The inspectors agree with most of the parents' very positive comments. They agree that some pupils make good progress and the progress of the majority is satisfactory, but the progress of the most able should be improved.
- The inspectors judged the homework to be appropriate and the extra curricular activities to be good.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. In the year 2000 national tests for seven-year-olds, pupils' standards were above the national average in reading, in line with the national average in writing and below the national average in mathematics. When compared with similar schools, standards were above average in reading, but below average in writing and mathematics. Over the last three years, they have been above the national average in reading but below in writing and mathematics. What brings the overall standards down in writing and mathematics is not the proportion of pupils gaining the expected level 2, which is average, but the lower than average proportion gaining the more advanced level 3. Most pupils attain the standards expected of them, and special educational needs pupils achieve well, making good progress as a result of support from teachers and teaching assistants. However, higher attaining pupils do not do as well as expected. The school knows this and has put greater challenge for higher attaining pupils as one of its main priorities in order to raise standards. The gap between the standards attained by boys and girls has narrowed; in the 2000 tests there was little difference between the two, whilst in mathematics, boys' results were above those of girls.
2. In the year 2000 national tests for 11-year-olds, standards were in line with the national average in English and mathematics, and above the national average in science. When compared to similar schools, standards were average in English and mathematics and well above average in science. At this key stage, the proportion attaining the more advanced level 5 was in line with the national average in mathematics, above this in English and well above in science. Pupils with special educational needs continue to do well as a result of well-managed support and there is little difference between the standards attained by boys and girls.
3. Standards on entry to the school fluctuate slightly from year to year, but are broadly in line with the national average in reading and writing and a little below this in mathematics. When comparing their progress from when they enter school to their results at the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' achievements are good in reading, because they have moved from being in line with the national average to ending up above, and satisfactory in writing and mathematics because writing remains in line with the national average and mathematics remains a little below. The school is keen to improve pupils' achievements by raising the rate of progress made in writing and mathematics and is putting plans into effect to do this.
4. It is possible to compare the results of last year's Year 6 with their results when they were in Key Stage 1. This shows that progress over the four years was satisfactory in English and mathematics and good in science. Pupils' achievements were good in science because they were in line with the national average at the end of Key Stage 1 and were above this at the end of Key Stage 2. Pupils maintained their position in English and mathematics by remaining in line with the national average at the end of each key stage.
5. The school is gradually improving the way it compares pupils' starting points to where they finish in each key stage. As a result, the school is beginning to predict where pupils should reach in the future and is beginning to set targets that help teachers to set appropriate work. Pupils do not always make good or very good progress because staff have not worked out the stepping-stones that would help them to achieve a higher than average rate of progress. Also, some staff are hesitant to set pupils work that is above the levels expected of their age group, as this will run the risk of duplicating work that will be done in the next class. This is particularly the case at Key Stage 1. Teachers are beginning to accept that they need to give higher attaining pupils harder work that is normally suitable for older pupils, if these pupils are to make the good progress that they are capable of.
6. In work seen at the end of Key Stage 1 during the inspection, Year 2 pupils' standards closely reflect the results in last year's national tests. Pupils' standards are above average in reading,

average in writing and below average in mathematics. Pupils' speaking and listening skills are well developed. They express themselves clearly and listen attentively in conversation. They read fluently for their age, understanding the content of simple text and expressing thoughtful ideas about the events in their stories. In their writing, pupils are beginning to use interesting vocabulary and are beginning to change their style of writing for different purposes: for instance, when telling a story or describing things in front of them. In their mathematics, pupils have a grasp of basic addition and subtraction and are quick when working out simple money sums, such as working out how much pocket money they will have left after buying sweets. However, few pupils have developed the more advanced skills needed to understand simple fractions or decimals. Pupils' scientific understanding is satisfactory. They understand the concept of a fair test, using simple equipment well in experiments, and recording their observations accurately. However, the proportion working at the higher level 3 is below average and so most pupils are not yet able to communicate their findings using suitable scientific language or come up with alternative ways for finding out why things happen the way they do.

7. In work seen at the end of Key Stage 2, attainments are above those seen in last year's national tests in English, and mirror the standards attained in mathematics. In science, though pupils are still doing well, fewer high attaining pupils mean overall standards are average rather than higher. In English, pupils read confidently, understanding a range of different texts, in which they read between the lines for subtleties of meaning. In their writing, pupils express lively and thoughtful ideas, adjusting what they write to create impact for the intended reader. They often use adventurous vocabulary, using their imagination to convey a sense of drama. However, spelling is a weaker area. In their mathematics, pupils have mental recall of their multiplication tables, confidently use short division and multiplication, with higher attainers confidently transferring between fractions, percentages and decimals as they convey statistical data. In science, pupils interpret emerging patterns as they conduct experiments, often summarising trends in the form of graphs or tables.
8. The national literacy strategy has had a positive impact on standards in both key stages. Teachers feel comfortable with it, and consequently, standards of reading are above average. There was initially less support for writing in the strategy, but staff are adapting the materials to ensure that there is better support, particularly for higher attaining pupils. Pupils use their literacy skills effectively in some subjects of the curriculum, such as science where their reports of experiments are well-organised, and in history projects where pupils write at length about the results of their own research. However teachers do not exact the same standards in pupils' writing in all classes in other subjects and there is no consistency of practice. A whole school policy for literacy would help to reflect the quality of presentation and accuracy necessary for standards in writing to rise.
9. Numeracy skills are well used in science to present findings in tables and a variety of graphs and as a measuring tool in design technology. The national numeracy strategy has been implemented well, although because it was introduced later than the literacy strategy it is not used as flexibly. As a result, a significant minority of higher attainers in Key Stage 1 do not progress as well as they might.
10. Pupils with special educational needs are achieving well and regularly succeed, sometimes surpassing the key targets set for them, for example, in reading. Most of these pupils begin their school life with a very low level of attainment and a limited range of experience. Many can hardly communicate when they enter the reception class and within a short period of time make rapid progress due to specialist teaching and the knowledge that they are valued members of every class group. Their needs are identified early and special targets are set for them to help them to improve. By the age of seven, many pupils listen intently and have developed initial skills in reading and writing. Pupils with physical disabilities learn to become more independent and to manage their environment and their learning with self-assurance and dignity. They respond to all aspects of the curriculum, including areas which they find difficult, with enthusiasm and confidence due to the holistic approach to their needs; for example, through the regular liaison with staff and outside agencies, and the sensitive adaptation of accommodation and resources. Pupils with statements of special educational need achieve well and generally make good

progress over time towards the targets set in their statements and in their individual education plans (IEPs) because they receive targeted specialist support in lessons or are withdrawn for specific help to reinforce particular basic skills. Pupils, despite their difficulties, have very good attitudes towards their learning, and class teachers and assistants provide good levels of support for them. As a result, pupils achieve well regardless of their individual starting points.

11. Children in the foundation stage make satisfactory progress over all, and are likely to exceed the national early learning goals in communication, language and literacy, and knowledge and understanding of the world. They are also well on course to meet the goals in mathematical understanding, creative development, physical development and personal and social development. This is because teachers provide a good variety of purposeful activities. Children are thus prepared effectively for starting the programmes of study of the National Curriculum.
12. Standards in information and communication technology are below average because the school does not have enough computers. Currently, pupils do not get enough 'hands on' experience to develop their skills. Achievement is unsatisfactory. Funding has been identified for the building of a new computer suite and work has already started on this project. This will enable pupils to have considerably more access to information and communication technology. Although standards of attainment of the substantial majority of pupils are below the national average, when pupils have the opportunity to use computers they are enthusiastic and achieve well. The cross-curricular use of information and communication technology is developing satisfactorily in some subjects. Standards in religious education are being inspected separately under the arrangements for church schools. In the other subjects of the curriculum, standards are satisfactory in all but geography in Key Stage 2 where standards are below average. This is because the school has rightly been concentrating on English and mathematics over the last few years and in geography, the new curriculum is not fully covered. Pupils have not yet acquired the skills necessary to argue cause and effect, or develop map-making and reading sufficiently well in Key Stage 2.

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

13. The pupils have a good attitude to their education. They are proud of their school, and want other people to view it in a good light. They are keen to come to school in the morning, with even the youngest pupils happy to say goodbye to parents outside the playground. They go to their classes without wasting time and are ready to start work when the school day commences. Pupils with special educational needs, despite their difficulties, have very good attitudes towards their learning. They try very hard to work to the best of their ability. All pupils feel secure and valued in school. In their lessons, they want to learn and are attentive and conscientious. They are proud of their achievements. For example, a group of younger pupils were very keen to talk about their collages made with stones and other found objects, and to explain the inspiration for their own work. The school has a positive learning attitude that has been established through the teachers' hard work and commitment. The pupils' enthusiasm for school contributes significantly towards their attainment and progress. It is reflected in the way they sustain interest in their studies and are keen to participate through answering questions. Even in the Reception year, children are confident and well motivated in school. They were very keen to discuss their work on symmetry, and were pleased when their Duplo models were displayed on the side. At both key stages, pupils settle promptly to written work and are able to work in silence when required to do so. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour have improved since the last inspection of the school.
14. The behaviour of pupils is good and makes a positive contribution to their learning. Pupils are aware of the school's expectations of them. This means that teachers do not spend much time in lessons maintaining order and can use the available time productively to further pupils' learning. Even in the Reception year, pupils are able to move around the hall in a PE lesson, including hopping and going backwards, without any silly behaviour. In a year 1 lesson pupils made paper mittens and then moved around the classroom attempting various tasks to test their fitness for the purpose. What could have been a chaotic lesson without pupils' good sense was in fact an orderly session, with pupils behaving very sensibly. Further up the school, in a year 5/6 ICT lesson conducted in a very stuffy classroom, (all windows being shut on a hot day because of building works outside), most pupils remained keen to answer questions and to participate.

15. Pupils behave well as they move around the school, in assemblies, and whilst eating lunch in the hall. However, behaviour in the lower playground at lunchtimes is often robust and boisterous; it includes too much play fighting, which although not vindictive, has the potential to appear threatening. This playground is quite a sterile environment and some pupils appear to avoid it if possible at lunchtime. The school knows this and is aware that it needs to be addressed. It has made some improvements; for example, a pleasant seated area in woodland has been created and at morning play, two large bags of equipment are taken down to the playground for pupils to use. A learning support assistant also organizes playground games. The upper playground, with the younger pupils, has a much more pleasant atmosphere. Playground behaviour seldom goes as far as bullying. This 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. There have been a few justified exclusions in the past year, usually for violent behaviour. Usually pupils are polite to each other and to adults. For example, it is common for a pupil to apologise after being admonished by a teacher. Pupils value each other as individuals and they understand the impact of their actions on others. Parents are very satisfied by the school's standards of behaviour and believe that it is successful in helping their children develop good attitudes and values.
16. Pupils' personal development is good. The school provides some opportunities to take responsibility, for example, putting out the furniture for assemblies, picking litter in the grounds, acting as "gatekeeper" to the door out to the playground at lunchtime and counting supermarket computer vouchers. Pupils are capable of carrying out such tasks without needing adults to give them direction. They help each other in class, for example, one pupil showing another work he had missed through absence. The children have a personal confidence that makes them pleasant people to meet but also contributes to their learning. One example was in the way reception children were happy to perform their new verses to the poem "Incy Wincy Spider" to the rest of the class - an impressive display of confidence for such young pupils. At the other end of the school, year 6 pupils help at lunchtimes in the infant playground. House-captains and vice-captains fulfil their roles with enthusiasm. A particularly good example was the way that a house-captain of Ramsay had motivated his house to break their run of failing to win the weekly house point competition. At both key stages, pupils take appropriate responsibility for their own learning, for example, the way older pupils complete their homework diaries in a way more typical of secondary pupils. There is no school council in which pupils can express their views, but Year 4 and 5 pupils are consulted for ideas on occasion.
17. Relationships within the school are good and pupils generally respect their teachers. Pupils can work well collaboratively 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. For example, in a science lesson they worked well together in groups to take regular temperature readings as water cooled. They show respect for the school's property, use equipment sensibly and are trusted by teachers to use resources and facilities with minimum levels of supervision. They display the common courtesies, such as holding a door for somebody following them through it. They play well together. Boys and girls work together unselfconsciously.
18. Pupils' attendance is good, being above the national average for a school of this type. The number of unauthorised absences, those for which no reason is recorded in the attendance registers, is below average. No specific group of pupils has an attendance record significantly worse than the others. Many pupils have good attendance records, and inevitably there are a few with a more disrupted pattern of attendance.

## HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

19. The quality of teaching is good overall and leads to good learning. Ninety-eight percent of teaching was satisfactory or better, with 69 per cent being good or better and two percent unsatisfactory. This is similar to the judgements at the time of the previous inspection. Examples of good and very good teaching were seen in most subjects and at both key stages.
20. The quality of teaching is variable but the majority is good or better in both key stages and in the reception year. As in the previous inspection, there is some very good teaching where teachers, secure in their specialist subjects, produced high quality lessons. In Year 1, two thirds of the teaching was good or better and the rest satisfactory. As a result of the quality of the teaching and the good provision for pupils with special educational needs, pupils make good progress from their average attainment on entry. However, although most pupils achieve as they should, by the end of Year 2, standards among more able children are not as high as they should be because teachers' expectations are not always high enough.
21. The basics of good teaching are well in place in the school. Lessons are carefully planned in terms of their structure and timing. Methods are appropriate to what is being learned. Good discipline enables learning to take place, and encourages the pupils to work hard. The provision for homework ensures that an appropriate amount is set as pupils move through the school. This encourages their involvement in their own learning and effectively supports learning in the classroom. The weaknesses in standards in information and communication technology and in geography, and to some extent in science, result from weaknesses in resources or curriculum rather than teaching. However the area of teaching that should be improved is specifically the issue of getting the expectations of the most able right, and thus setting them challenging enough work.
22. The quality of teaching is good in English. The teaching of literacy is good overall, and teachers show a good understanding of how to teach the literacy hour. The end of lessons is used well to share and reinforce what pupils have learnt during the lesson and to encourage pupils to think about what they need to learn next. However, the teaching of reading is better than the teaching of writing. Teachers do not exact the same standards in pupils' writing in all classes in other subjects and there is no consistency of practice. Teaching is satisfactory in both key stages in mathematics and in numeracy. Teachers understand the National Numeracy Strategy well and apply its techniques successfully. As a result, pupils acquire new knowledge systematically with sound continuity to their learning. However they do not adapt the framework with confidence to the needs of the more able pupils. In numeracy, the correct emphasis on precise mathematical language promotes learning. Teachers take every opportunity to extend language and this contributes to standards in English, mathematics and science. Teachers have good science subject knowledge. This helps them to question pupils well. For example, challenging questions enabled pupils to make good gains in their knowledge about drugs and medicine and the effects of smoking and alcohol.
23. There was insufficient evidence to make a judgement in art, information and communication technology, music, history and geography, nor at Key Stage 1 in design and technology and physical education. Teaching is good in these subjects at Key Stage 2. The most successful lessons are where the teaching includes high expectations, the very good management of pupils and very effective organisation to ensure that tasks are well matched to the needs of the pupils. In physical education, skills are taught well so pupils gain new technique quickly. Succinct, clear explanations ensure pupils know exactly what they have to do in design and technology.
24. The quality of teaching for children in the foundation stage is good overall and contributes to good learning for the majority. Four out of six lessons were judged to be good and the rest were satisfactory. Teachers have a good understanding of the needs of young children and plan lessons to meet their needs. A warm, encouraging relationship invites all to take part and children are well managed, leading to an effective learning environment. Good use of well-trained classroom assistants and parent helpers ensures that children have sufficient adult support and that every opportunity to extend language is taken.



25. The teachers and well-trained assistants know the capabilities of pupils with special educational needs well through carefully planned and detailed assessment. Some have expert knowledge of how to meet pupils' needs. They have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and attainment, and their planning is thorough. Individual and group work is carefully tailored to match work in the mainstream lesson usually after detailed collaboration with individual class teachers. Opportunities are well used to disseminate good classroom practice.

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

26. The school provides a broad curriculum that contains all the required subjects, including religious education. The balance of time allocated to subjects has improved since the last inspection, although there are still several anomalies. The amount of time given to science is still a little low in Key Stage 1, and this limits the level of challenge, particularly for higher attaining pupils. The amount of time for information and communication technology is low because the school is still waiting for the delivery of new machines and the completion of the computer suite. The above average time given to English and mathematics successfully underpins standards of literacy and numeracy across the curriculum. The total amount of teaching time in Key Stage 2, which was low at the time of the last inspection, has been increased to bring it into line with the national average. There are still no formal arrangements for the teaching of personal, social and health education (PSHE), although the school is in the process of agreeing a new policy and has ensured that important aspects of pupils' personal development is covered in circle time and in other identified lessons. The school have made arrangements for education on puberty and adolescence for the oldest pupils, although some parents would like this to be introduced sooner. Inspectors feel that the arrangements are suitable because some compulsory components of sex education are provided for pupils before their final year in science lessons. Teachers also answer pupils' questions as they arise in a sensitive way.
27. Some improvements to the curriculum have taken place. Design technology, which was weak at the time of the last inspection, now has a policy and scheme of work in place, and the co-ordinator has had further training. Additional funding for information and communication technology has provided staff training, although improvements will not gather pace until the new computer suite is equipped and completed later this year. Nationally approved schemes in other subject areas now provide long term planning and teachers use these as a basis for their medium term planning each half term and for detailed weekly planning. Improvements have been made to ensure full coverage of the geography curriculum, but these have yet to impact on standards.
28. The national literacy strategy introduced in 1998 has had a positive impact on standards in both key stages. Teachers feel comfortable with the strategy, using the various materials successfully and increasingly adapting the scheme to their particular teaching style and the kinds of pupils in their classes. Consequently, standards of reading are above average. There was initially less support for writing in the strategy, though schools are now being encouraged to give it more attention. Staff are adapting the materials to ensure that there is better support, particularly for higher attaining pupils.
29. The national numeracy strategy, introduced in 1999, has also been implemented well, although because it was introduced later than the literacy strategy, teachers have not yet used all the materials as flexibly as they could. This is understandable, as teachers need time to get used to using the materials before they adapt them for their particular situations. As a result, a significant minority of higher attainers in Key Stage 1, as well as some in Key Stage 2, do not progress as well as they might. Overall, however, the materials have had a positive impact as a result of teachers' willingness and hard work, and their increasing confidence will continue to benefit pupils' learning across the age and ability range.
30. The curriculum provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. It is most effective where teachers carefully tailor their resources and teaching specifically to meet the needs of pupils with limited literacy skills. The school integrates pupils with SEN; particularly those with physical disability, very successfully into school life by expert informed support in lessons and by

careful use of outside agencies and resources. Effective planning and careful coordination ensures there is systematic progression in pupils' learning. There is good practice in meeting the individual learning needs of pupils in most classes in literacy and numeracy. The use of specialist support from outside agencies for pupils with special educational needs is well managed within the school.

31. The curriculum is good in the foundation stage (Year R). Teachers' planning is clear and covers all the early learning goals with appropriate and purposeful activities linked to their topic themes. Both teachers plan together to give the children similar experiences and they make best use of the accommodation available to provide for the needs of young children. At the moment there is no secure outdoor play area, but teachers ensure that they provide opportunities for pupils to use large equipment and wheeled vehicles, where possible, in the larger space available in the hall. Teachers also design the curriculum to make effective use of the children's current experiences. For example, they observed the builders at work through the classroom window and then painted them. The accommodation is altered to encourage planned opportunities for play, for example the 'Garden Centre' where children can act out their own experiences of gardening and shopping.
32. Provision for extra curricular activities is good. There are regular clubs at lunchtime and after school. The range of activities includes recorder playing, choir, games club, art club, maypole dancing, athletics and design technology. The school swimming, football and netball teams contribute successfully to local fixtures, whilst drama activities regularly culminate in school performances. This full range of exciting activities contributes much to pupils' education, promoting their social and moral development and helping them to enjoy their time in school.
33. Whilst the school does not have a formal scheme or policy for teaching PSHE, individual teachers provide discrete arrangements. There is regular 'circle time' in some classes that provide opportunities for pupils to share their ideas and concerns. However, formal provision will not be available until after a review that is taking place during 2001 and 2002. Following this review, the school plans to have a syllabus for use in each class.
34. The school has a good equality of opportunity policy. No pupils are disapplied from any parts of the curriculum and there is regular provision for religious education, based on the Kent Agreed Syllabus. There is a daily act of collective worship based on Anglican principles, and parents are informed of their right to exclude their child from religious education or collective worship if they wish. Football and netball are available to both boys and girls and the school has recently introduced the concession that girls should be able to wear trousers if they wish. The school has made good provision for wheelchair users through adaptations to the building. Further modifications are planned within tight financial constraints. A good feature of equality of opportunity provision is the monitoring of playground games to ensure that ball games, and particularly football, do not unduly interfere with other children's use of the shared space.
35. The community makes a good contribution to pupils' learning. There are regular visitors who talk to the children. For instance, at the last book week several authors and illustrators shared their work with the pupils. The school makes good use of the local Anglican Church. It holds regular services in the church and the minister visits the school regularly, often leading daily acts of worship. There are performances to the elderly and the school contributes to local pageants, such as the recent millennium celebrations. Even more recently, the school supported the Three Peaks Challenge, which provides seed funding for local youth work. Collections for charities such as Age Concern and the blind ensure that the school is outward looking. This is further reinforced through the good links with the local secondary school and pre school providers.
36. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is good. A daily collective act of worship contains prayers, hymns, and stories from the bible and moral teaching. The act of worship is based on Church of England beliefs and is often led by the parish priest. During the week of the inspection, pupils contributed significantly to assemblies through drama, role-play, and performance by the school band and through the participative elements of prayer and singing. Once a week, year six pupils prepare and lead the assembly and they arrange the hall each for each one. Pupils respectfully say prayers before lunch and at the end of the school day. The school regularly

attends the parish church to celebrate important seasonal festivals. These include Christmas, Easter, harvest, Ash Wednesday and Ascension Day. All pupils have regular lessons in religious education using the locally agreed syllabus. This provides opportunities to compare different religious traditions such as Sikhism and Judaism, and religious education makes a good contribution to spiritual development. Whilst spiritual aspects are not formally planned into other subjects of the curriculum, there are opportunities for reflection that help pupils to consider issues beyond the immediate. For instance in one Key Stage 2 geography lesson, pupils thought about why people come to Dover and in a Key Stage 1 geography class, pupils reflected on similarities and differences between an English town and an overseas village.

37. Provision for pupils' moral development is good. Teachers provide a good example to pupils. Relationships are supportive and empathic, pupils are encouraged to think about the effects of their actions on others and there are regular opportunities for pupils to help others in the school community and beyond. Older pupils keep an eye on younger pupils in the playground and corridors and pupils collect regularly for worthy causes. Procedures for ensuring good behaviour are well established and effective in practice. Consequently, pupils know the difference between right and wrong and conduct themselves in a sensible and considerate way in lessons and around the school. Circle time provides regular opportunities for pupils to think about the consequences of their actions to themselves and others. The value they place on friendship and each other is very clear in their support and kindness towards pupils with learning disabilities and special educational needs.
38. Provision for pupils' social education is good. The regular opportunities for corporate worship, the visits outside school to places of educational interest and collaborative work in lessons such as music ensure that pupils have regular opportunities to share and work together. Regular use of circle time provides opportunities for pupils to share their views and ideas in a mutually supportive atmosphere. The regular visits include a Year 5 residential visit to an outdoor activities centre. Pupils contribute significantly to community events such as the recent millennium celebrations. They regularly visit an elderly people's home to sing and to chat to the residents. The school realises that it does not currently provide formal lessons in personal, social and health education (PSHE) but plans to do so in the near future. This will bring together aspects of teaching and social education that is already covered, but without consistency, across different parts of the curriculum.
39. Provision for pupils' cultural education is satisfactory overall. There are numerous opportunities for pupils to appreciate their local culture. Visits to Dover castle, the museum and other local venues of historical and cultural interest are frequent. In art and music lessons, pupils look at pictures and hear music from the European tradition. In history, pupils appreciate those events that contribute to a sense of tradition, and in religious education, pupils understand the importance of different religions in defining and maintaining cultural identity and pride. European day was celebrated in one class by running a French café to which parents enthusiastically attended and was thoroughly enjoyed by all. However, the school does not teach pupils enough about the culture of minority groups in Britain or about different cultures from around the world. With the exception of one successful assembly that highlighted aspects of Asian culture and traditions, there are insufficient displays or regular references to black achievement and there are few visitors who come to share their distinct and different traditions, values and lifestyles. Consequently, pupils are not fully prepared to contribute to Britain's multicultural society.

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

40. The school provides a caring and emotionally secure environment for its pupils. The value the whole school community places on all pupils is shown in its aims and equal opportunities policy and, in practice, in the way the school enables pupils with special educational needs to learn alongside their classmates and integrate fully within the class activities. Overall, the quality of the school's provision for the care of its pupils has been maintained since the last inspection of the school and this has a positive impact in improving pupils' learning and attainment.

41. The school has good procedures for child protection in place, which are fully communicated throughout the school. The headteacher has received necessary training and liaises effectively with the local social services department. The school keeps appropriate records on pupils where there are particular causes for concern. The school has a good health and safety policy which outlines individuals' responsibilities. Appropriate routine health and safety procedures are in place, and safety reviews of the site are carried out in line with the policy. A more formal risk assessments checklist would help this process. Safety checks and procedures for off-site school trips are appropriate. Safe practices were seen in virtually all lessons during the inspection.
42. The school has good provision for the personal support and guidance of pupils. Teachers know their pupils well and treat each as an individual. They keep records as necessary. Teachers are aware of the specific needs of their pupils and provide good support. There is sufficient monitoring and recording of pupils' personal development, inevitably being more detailed for pupils who have experienced behavioural or other difficulties. The comments in the written reports on individual pupils last year were often perceptive, whilst those from the headteacher also suggest that she knows her charges well. Although classes have circle times, which provide an opportunity for teachers to pick up pupils' personal problems, these would benefit from more formal planning and training for teachers. Overall, support and guidance for pupils with special educational needs is good. Experienced well-qualified staff, with a very good knowledge of these pupils provides them with particularly high levels of support and guidance. This has a very strong positive impact on their achievement and learning.
43. The school's procedures to monitor and promote behaviour are good, based on effective and consistent implementation of the school's behaviour policy. The whole school community is aware of the rewards and sanctions and how they will be applied. Pupils also know exactly what is expected of them and what consequences will result from different behaviour. The school policy needs to be more specific as to when particular sanctions, especially exclusion, will be applied. Similarly, procedures to deal with bullying or other oppressive behaviour are effective insofar as such behaviour is rare in the school, but the behaviour policy does need to provide clearer guidance to staff on how to handle any incidents that do occur, for example, when to involve parents or the headteacher. The one exception to this generally effective picture is a need to improve behaviour management in the lower playground at lunchtime.
44. The school has satisfactory procedures to monitor attendance. The computerised recording system is used to identify pupils with poor attendance records and the Educational Welfare Officer is involved as necessary.
45. Procedures for assessing pupils' knowledge, understanding and achievements are satisfactory. All pupils are assessed on entry to the school using an 'in house' system for early assessment and this is followed by the Local Education Authority baseline assessment. This provides a clear picture of pupils' individual strengths and weaknesses and allows the school to compare itself with other local schools. Consequently, retrospective analysis of pupils' progress by comparing their performance in national tests with their original baseline profile is difficult. The school tests pupils at the end of Year 1 to ensure they are making secure progress as they move towards the national tests that all pupils take at the end of Year 2, although these procedures do not always identify specific needs, for instance the needs of higher attaining pupils, who do not attain the proportion of 'Level 3's expected of them.
46. In Key Stage 2, pupils sit optional tests at the end of Years 3, 4 and 5 in preparation for the national tests in Year 6. These interim tests are a useful way for showing whether pupils are meeting the expectations required for pupils of their age. There are further tests at the beginning and end of each year that are used alongside the optional national tests to track pupils' progress. In addition to these formal tests, teachers make interim assessments as necessary in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science to track pupils' progress. Assessments in the non-core subjects are not so well established. Individual teachers evaluate pupils' progress as they see fit. Although these assessments are not formalized and do not therefore provide a cumulative record of pupils' achievements.

47. The use of assessment to predict pupils' future results and to make adjustments to the curriculum and teaching is unsatisfactory. Although some teachers use assessment well to identify trends and set targets, for example to identify pupils for extra support in literacy, this is generally at an early stage and is inconsistent. The headteacher and core co-ordinators are collating pupils' past test scores to project their likely attainment in future tests. For instance, the mathematics co-ordinator has listed where each pupils is at on a grid and has a clear idea of what they need to do to achieve at or above expectation in the future. This form of analysis is beginning to have an impact on planning and teaching. Whilst teachers still tend to use informed guesses rather than calculating statistically valid and reliable projections, the school is investing in computer applications that will provide a much higher level of analytical accuracy, and selected staff are being trained to use this system.
48. The assessment of pupils with special educational needs is thorough, regular and of a good standard. Individual education plans are well written and are reviewed regularly. The monitoring and recording for pupils with a statement of special educational needs are good and annual reviews effectively meet the requirements of the national Code of Practice.

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

49. Most 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 and that the school is well led. The majority of parents think that the school keeps them well informed and that it works well with parents. The quality of the partnership with parents has been improved since the last inspection of the school. Most parents are very supportive of the school and they do feel that they can contact it with any problems or suggestions and that they will be listened to.
50. The school provides a very good range of information for parents. Parents throughout the school have regular meetings with teachers and the school arranges a chance for parents to view children's work. Information has been made available to parents to inform them of the curriculum being followed to enable them to support their children if they wish to do so. This has included curriculum workshops in which parents work alongside their children. The written reports on pupil progress are very good – they are based on a computer-generated model, but teachers use this template intelligently to create comments that do reflect the individual quality of the child, a fact recognised and appreciated by parents. They provide enough information on how children are actually progressing and curriculum coverage, together with some key targets for improvement. Parents are informed of specific issues and kept in touch with events in the life of the school through useful regular newsletters. The school prospectus and the Governors' Annual Report to parents are both good documents that reflect the school accurately. The reading record books and the homework books are used effectively on occasion as effective two-way forms of communication.
51. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are fully involved in their children's learning and experiences in school. From very careful induction into foundation stage through to the secondary school, parents are kept well-informed about their children's progress. The school makes particular efforts to encourage parents to become involved in their children's learning and encourages them to come into the school. The parents of pupils with special educational needs are given an appropriate involvement in the reviews of their progress.
52. Parents make a very good contribution to children's learning. There is a good home-school agreement, and parents support their children's work by helping with homework, particularly by hearing them to read on a regular basis. An assembly on a European theme led the parents of the class involved to produce some effective national costumes for their children, and several mothers helped dress the children before their performance, contributing significantly to its effectiveness. About twenty parents came to a "French breakfast" with their children. A significant number of parents help in school and they also have a positive impact on the work of the school in other ways. There is an exceptionally active PTA, which organises social and fundraising events. Parents also help in practical ways, such as redecorating.

## HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

53. The overall leadership and management of the headteacher and key staff are satisfactory. The headteacher provides encouraging leadership and is well supported by the key stage co-ordinators and core subject co-ordinators. The whole school is committed to continual improvement. Most of the unsatisfactory areas identified by the inspection team, as well as the many strengths, have already been identified by the school. However, although these areas have been identified and actions planned there remain significant tasks to do before standards improve. Though the capability to improve is good, it is too early to say that the management has reached this stage, as the improvements in provision, undertaken or planned, have not yet had time to fully impact on standards. There has been satisfactory improvement since the previous inspection, with indications that the structures are in place for significant developments.
54. The way in which the aims of the school are reflected in all its work is good. The headteacher and key stage co-coordinators work well together as a team for the benefit of all pupils. All staff have a good understanding of the areas for development in their subjects. For example, the co-ordinators for geography and information and communication technology have already identified the need to extend learning opportunities in these subjects. The co-ordinator for special educational needs (SENCO) is well supported by the headteacher and has worked hard to create an ethos of inclusion within the school. There has been good progress since the last inspection in the provision for pupils with SEN. The high level of support provided by the team of teachers and support assistants makes an effective contribution to learning. They meet regularly together and with class teachers and their work is well-coordinated and suitably matched to pupils' individual needs. Their training and expertise is updated by regular courses and visits to other educational establishments and outside agencies.
55. The school is effectively evaluating its performance and has started to address any weaknesses; for example, analysis of results identified writing as an area for improvement at the end of both key stages. Consequently, the literacy strategy has been adapted to the needs of the pupils and this is beginning to have a positive impact on pupils' attainment. The school sets the statutory targets to raise standards in English and mathematics and pupils also have their own individual targets which are reviewed by teachers and pupils every term. The use of assessment to predict pupils' future results and to make adjustments to the curriculum and teaching is not well advanced in other areas of the curriculum. However, the school is investing in computer applications that will support analysis of data.
56. The headteacher monitors teaching effectively in the core subjects of English and mathematics. She ensures that training is available to keep up to date with new initiatives and to increase the knowledge and expertise of teachers who have had to change subject responsibilities. Monitoring and support is less structured in other subjects of the curriculum. Few coordinators are able to carry out monitoring of provision, teaching and learning in subjects other than English and mathematics. There is no structured system whereby the head can monitor and take action in these subjects through the coordinators. As a result, though teaching is good overall, it is harder for the school management to come to a whole school view of what to change to improve minor areas that need development. It is also harder to give governors a close involvement in monitoring.
57. The way in which the governing body fulfils its responsibilities is satisfactory. There are some recent appointments and under the guidance of the headteacher, they are developing an understanding of their roles. They already have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. They show commitment to the school, although some are unable to visit regularly due to work commitments. All governors aim to visit the school at least once each half term and two nominated governors have a special focus for their visits – behaviour, or a particular area of the curriculum – which is reported back to the full governing body, both orally and in writing. There is an appropriate range of committees who report to the full governing body. The governors have successfully addressed the issues identified in the previous report and consequently there has been satisfactory improvement. They are beginning to be more closely involved in the process of monitoring and evaluating the performance of the school.

58. The school makes effective use of funds made available to it. For example, their bid for an 'ACCESS' grant has helped them to plan appropriate improvements to the school building to ensure access for physically disabled pupils. The funds the school receives for pupils with special educational needs through the local education authority audit are appropriately targeted and efficiently managed. The school makes a major commitment from its budget to the provision of support staff. This impacts favourably on the attainment of all pupils, and particularly those with special educational needs. The use of information and communication technology is an integral feature in the management of the school. The school development plan is a working document that is now well constructed to raise standards. Spending decisions focus on raising standards in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology. Good information is regularly provided about the budget to keep governors informed. They have prudently built up a contingency fund to cover the necessary costs of contributing to the improvements in the accommodation, including an extended classroom, an early years play area, a computer suite and improved facilities for staff. The administrative staff manage day-to-day accounts and office procedures well, so that the school runs smoothly, allowing teachers to concentrate on lessons. The principles of best value are applied satisfactorily in the school's use of its resources. For example, the school employs its own caretaking and cleaning staff and a private company for the maintenance of the grounds because it is more cost-effective.
59. A judgement on value for money is based on how effective the school is in relation to its expenditure. The school is effective. The attainments of children on entry to the school are broadly average and overall they are making satisfactory progress – there is better achievement in some areas and weaker achievement in others. The quality of the education, including the quality of teaching, is good. The school promotes good attitudes and has good standards of behaviour. Provision for personal development, including, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. The school's expenditure is broadly average, so it provides satisfactory value for money.
60. The school has sufficient teachers for the number of pupils on roll. They are suitably qualified and trained to deliver the appropriate curriculum to this age range of pupils. Curriculum co-ordination tasks are spread amongst the experienced teachers. Support staff make a significant contributions to pupils' learning. The school currently has two newly qualified teachers on its staff. The school has provided satisfactory induction and training for them. It has made appropriate arrangements for them to receive support from an appropriate mentor and they have access to on-going training.
61. The school accommodation is in the process of significant improvement, namely the addition of an extra classroom and an information and communication technology room. Currently it provides a sound learning environment. Most classes are taught in large, bright and airy classrooms, although a makeshift one that is currently occupied by a small class lacks space and is awkwardly shaped. The library resources are spread, with no one room large enough to consolidate them. The school hall is large enough to allow the full physical education curriculum to be delivered effectively, and there are two reasonably sized playgrounds, together with a field, providing an additional area for sporting activities. Hence, despite its steeply sloping site, the school is able to deliver the National Curriculum from its accommodation. The standard of cleanliness has been improved considerably since the last inspection of the school, when it was criticised, thanks to the efforts of the caretaker and the cleaning staff, a fact appreciated by parents. The premises have been enhanced by a number of attractive murals, the one created by the caretaker in the lower boys' toilets on a science fiction theme, being particularly impressive!
62. The school has sufficient learning resources to deliver the National Curriculum effectively in most subjects. The one exception is information and communication technology, where curriculum delivery is compromised by the limited availability of computers and other equipment. This problem will be addressed when the planned information and communication technology room becomes available. The library has a satisfactory stock of books.

## WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

63. In order to further raise standards and improve the quality of education offered, the headteacher, senior management team and governing body should take the actions listed below.

1. Improve standards in information and communication technology\* across the school by:

- implementing the plans for provision of improved resources;
- training staff in their use;
- giving guidance to staff on the use of information and communication technology across the various subjects; and
- monitoring the take up of the new equipment to ensure pupils are getting sufficient experience

(These are covered in paragraphs 12, 62, 87-88, 98, 118-119)

2. Raise the attainment of higher attaining pupils in mathematics\* and science at Key Stage 1, and in writing\*, by:

at Key Stage 1:

- improving the teaching of handwriting and accuracy in punctuation;
- raising teachers' expectations of what these pupils know, understand and can do;
- making better use of assessment data in planning challenging work;
- considering an increase in the time given to science;

and throughout the school:

- improving spelling;
- ensuring teachers demand the same high standards in pupils' writing in subjects other than English;

(These are covered in paragraphs 1, 3, 5, 8-9, 20-22, 26, 29, 69, 74, 80, 82, 86, 88-92, 94, 96)

3. Raise standards in geography\* in Key Stage 2 by:

- teaching geographic skills such as map-making and map-reading
- in more depth

(These are covered in paragraphs 12, 27, 111-112)

4. Further develop the monitoring of non-core subjects by:

- implementing a structured system that allows coordinators opportunities to monitor provision and classroom practice, and ensures that the headteacher and governors receive feedback on the results.

(These are covered in paragraphs 56, 105, 111, 113, 117, 125)

\*These issues have already been identified by the school and are prioritised in the current development plan.

The following minor areas may also be considered by the school for improvement in the action plan:



- (1) Development of multicultural awareness ( paragraph 39)
- (2) Formal arrangements for PSHE (paragraphs26, 33, 42)
- (3) Further development of behaviour policy (paragraph 43)

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed

45

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

23

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	16	53	29	2	0	0

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

### Information about the school's pupils

#### Pupils on the school's roll

YR – Y6

Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)

289

Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals

36

#### Special educational needs

YR – Y6

Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs

4

Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register

76

#### English as an additional language

No of pupils

Number of pupils with English as an additional language

3

#### Pupil mobility in the last school year

No of pupils

Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission

12

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

17

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.4
National comparative data	5.2

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.1
National comparative data	0.5

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

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest	2000	20	24	44

reporting year				
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National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	18	17	20
	Girls	21	22	23
	Total	39	39	43
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	89 (81)	89 (81)	98 (88)
	National	83 (82)	84 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	19	20	20
	Girls	22	23	24
	Total	41	43	44
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	93 (84)	98 (91)	100 (88)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

#### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	18	18	36

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	15	15	17
	Girls	13	14	15
	Total	28	29	32
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	78 (72)	81 (64)	89 (82)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	12	12	15
	Girls	15	14	16
	Total	27	26	31
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	75 (62)	72 (59)	86 (79)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	79 (75)

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

### Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	2
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	1
White	247
Any other minority ethnic group	0

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

### Teachers and classes

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	12
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	24.1
Average class size	28.9

#### Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	10
Total aggregate hours worked per week	182

### 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	2	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

### Financial information

Financial year	2000/01
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	£
Total income	528217
Total expenditure	510196
Expenditure per pupil	1765
Balance brought forward from previous year	25382
Balance carried forward to next year	43403

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	287
Number of questionnaires returned	121

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	66	29	4	0	1
My child is making good progress in school.	59	36	6	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	40	52	3	1	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	42	44	9	3	1
The teaching is good.	65	33	1	0	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	50	43	7	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	74	22	2	1	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	71	26	2	0	1
The school works closely with parents.	44	50	2	1	4
The school is well led and managed.	62	31	2	1	5
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	58	38	1	2	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	36	40	10	1	12

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

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

64. Children enter the reception classes in the year in which they become five, attending full-time by the spring term. Evidence from the baseline assessments and inspection evidence shows that children's attainment on entry is slightly above the county average in most areas of learning, but below in mathematical understanding, and is therefore average overall. Children make satisfactory progress throughout the foundation stage, acquiring new knowledge, understanding and skills. Children with special educational needs have lower abilities, but make good progress to reach the same levels of attainment as their peers. Most are likely to exceed the national early learning goals in communication, language and literacy, and in their knowledge and understanding of the world. They are on course to meet the goals in mathematical understanding, creative development, physical development and personal and emotional development. These standards have been maintained since the previous inspection, and the children's achievements are satisfactory.
65. Children like coming to school and become very involved in the wide variety of learning tasks provided for them. They know that they are valued as individuals and in one class, which has been kept small because of the limited accommodation due to building work, they have particularly benefited from closer attention from their teacher.
66. The quality of teaching was good in more than half of the lessons seen, and satisfactory in the remainder. Teachers' planning is clear and covers all the early learning goals with appropriate and purposeful activities linked to their topic themes. Both teachers plan together to give the children similar experiences and they make best use of the accommodation available to provide for the needs of young children. Basic skills are taught well, with teachers and classroom assistants working well together as a team, encouraging the child to talk about their experiences. Parent helpers are very much part of the team and are used effectively to ensure that children receive a lot of individual attention. This makes a positive contribution to the quality of children's learning. The adults ensure that all children are involved in all activities, including the physically disabled and children with English as an additional language who need the extra help of a learning support assistance from the local authority support unit. The curriculum has been well designed and ongoing observation and good assessment and recording ensures that pupils are set tasks which are generally suitable to their needs.

**Personal, social and emotional development**

67. Children have many opportunities to develop their social skills. All adults take opportunities to develop these skills, encouraging them to take turns, work together and share resources. The quality of teaching in personal and emotional development is good overall. The consistent expectations of behaviour and the caring attitude of teachers, classroom assistants and parent helpers make a significant contribution to the children's feeling of safety and security. Children take responsibility for their own belongings when they change their clothes for physical activities. They are well behaved because they know that this is what their teachers expect and that good behaviour is encouraged and can be observed throughout the school. Although some still have difficulty observing classroom routines, such as waiting their turn to speak and lining up in pairs, they are on course to reach the early learning goals by the end of the foundation stage and are making satisfactory progress. Some already work independently while their teacher works with another group and develop their initiative by deciding which activity they would like to experience in some group sessions, like those with large construction equipment in the hall. They also develop their independence by taking turns to be helpers for the day. They relate very well to adults.

## **Communication, language and literacy**

68. The children's skills, particularly in speaking, are slightly above the county average when they start school. The majority of children are likely to exceed the early learning goals in communication, language and literacy by the end of the foundation stage. Adults take many opportunities to develop these skills and, as a result, pupils make satisfactory progress. For example, children develop their speaking skills through role-play in the 'Garden Centre', explaining what they are doing to adults and to other children. They speak clearly and confidently, usually in whole sentences. All know that print carries meaning and they enjoy listening to stories which are very well read by their teachers. They love picking out the detail in the illustrations to add to their understanding and enjoyment. Teachers give ample opportunities to explore language; for example, children expressing their opinions about the vegetables they are tasting, using words like 'nice' or 'horrible', 'hard' and 'soft.' Children already write their own names, many of them quite independently and their writing skills are developing well with many recognisable letters and words. For instance, they suggest many words beginning with 'w', like window, wonderful and windmill, then copy them from the board. They illustrate stories like 'Handa's Surprise', making an accurate sequence of events. Although one room is too small for a writing corner, the teacher ensures that there are always materials available for children to use. The school places great emphasis on the teaching of reading skills and the quality of teaching is good. Most children are well supported by parents sharing the books that they take home regularly. The highest attainers read fluently, accurately and expressively, using a variety of methods to work out unfamiliar words. Average children read slowly but accurately, relying on the pictures to help them read the words. Lower attaining children tell the story from the pictures with some prompting from adults. Their reading diaries list titles and dates, with comments from teachers, classroom assistants and parents on how well they are doing or when they need extra practice. They make good progress in reading.

## **Mathematical development**

69. Attainment in mathematics is likely to meet the early learning goals by the end of the reception year, and the quality of teaching is good overall. In a 'numeracy hour' the teacher's enthusiastic and lively presentation made counting to 50 emphasising the 10s great fun. The teacher gave a good introduction to the main task of working on symmetry and the children happily moved to group work with small construction apparatus and butterfly painting. They were pleased to show their models to the class at the end of the sessions and then displayed them around the room, proud of their results. In this way, children's learning was a good reinforcement of the idea of symmetry and the useful motivational practice of it in artwork and other contexts. For example, teachers took children on a walk in the immediate neighbourhood, looking for symmetrical patterns in buildings and children were eager to point out that the teacher's drawing of the front of her own house had a battlemented wall – 'just like the Castle!' Every opportunity is taken to include counting; for instance, the number of bricks in a model and using counting rhymes. Classroom displays are used effectively to support mathematical development. For example, children's simple graphs of favourite fruits, and a sunflower they have made, counting to ten to see how high it will grow, and their careful measurements of the 'monster' they have created on computer. Children are introduced to mathematical language in lessons in physical education as they move 'under' and 'over' the large apparatus. The majority of children achieve well in this area of learning. However, more could be done to challenge children who are more able.

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

70. Children's knowledge and understanding of the world is likely to exceed the national early learning goals by the end of the reception year. They use computers to make drawings, showing developing 'mouse' control. They use a variety of methods to join materials when making models and pictures of what they can see through the classroom windows; for example, staples, glue and sticky tape. They develop an understanding of the world around them when stories they hear are related to their own experience, which they talk about in the 'Garden Centre.' The quality of teaching is good overall and teachers link activities well to the topics children are working on, providing an opportunity for 'awe and wonder' when popping pods to show children the peas

inside. More than half accurately name some vegetables without difficulty, for example, carrots, potatoes, corn, cabbage and onions, although very few had made the connection between chips and potatoes. They enjoy being encouraged to taste various raw vegetables with a range of reactions from 'I love it' to 'Yuk!' Children use construction toys appropriately to develop their own ideas as well as their manipulative skills.

### **Physical development**

71. The children's physical development is on course to meet the standards expected at five years old and they make satisfactory progress. The current building programme is to provide them with a secure outdoor play area, so that this aspect of learning is presently limited. However, teachers ensure that they provide opportunities for pupils to use large equipment and wheeled vehicles, where possible, in the larger space available in the hall. There is a detailed action plan and resources budget to enhance this provision when the new accommodation is ready. Regular physical education lessons in the hall also allow children to gain confidence. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, although in one lesson, insufficient emphasis was placed on finding a large enough space to work without touching anyone else or bumping into them, and few children showed an awareness of how to avoid collisions. On this occasion, expectations of behaviour were lower than usual and some boys were rather boisterous when jumping from heights, which could create a safety hazard. The children were clearly enjoying the activities and were trying hard to think of imaginative ways of moving under, over and around the large apparatus. They also demonstrated how they carry mats safely and efficiently. Teachers make effective use of the children's demonstrations so that they can evaluate their own work and that of others. Children change their clothes very efficiently considering their age, leaving all their things together so that there will be no mix-up when the lesson is over. Children develop their manipulative skills through opportunities to handle small toys, pencils and scissors.

### **Creative development**

72. The children's creative development is on course to meet the early learning goals by the end of the foundation stage. Children learn to use paint appropriately to make symmetrical 'butterflies', showing developing hand control. They look closely at plants and draw or paint them, choosing colours carefully and mixing them to reflect the shades in the actual flowers. They observe the builders at work through the classroom window and then paint either the picture they have seen or an imaginary one. Children develop three-dimensional skills when they make plasticine fruits or decorate pots with egg-shells in them to make vegetable 'figures.' A role-play group in the 'Garden Centre' quickly adopted the mannerism they had observed, acting out their own experiences of gardening and shopping. They know the songs used in assemblies and join in with enthusiasm. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall and children make satisfactory progress.

## **ENGLISH**

73. At the time of the last report, standards in English were broadly in line with the national average at Key Stage 1 and above the national average at the end of Key Stage 2. These standards have been maintained. Evidence from the current Year 2 and Year 6 shows that standards are broadly average at Key Stage 1 and above average at Key Stage 2. In 2000, the previous Year 2 gained results in the Key Stage 1 National Tests that were above average in reading and average in writing. The previous Year 6 gained average results overall. The difference between the inspection judgement and the previous National Test results are because they are different groups of pupils. Achievement is satisfactory overall for both seven and eleven year olds.
74. Results at Key Stage 1 are below average in comparison to similar schools, primarily because of the difference between reading and writing standards. Although pupils performed well in reading, in writing a higher than average number of pupils attained level 2 but no pupil gained a level 3. Pupils also gained lower than average numbers of level 3s in the previous two years, though results in writing overall have been improving. However, the disparity suggests that some pupils, particularly higher attaining pupils, are not achieving as well as they could in writing. In the current year



group, writing is in line with the national average whereas reading and speaking and listening are higher. Pupils are acquiring good reading and speaking and listening skills, but their writing falls behind their achievements in the other areas. There is a similar picture at Key Stage 2. Although standards overall at Key Stage 2 are above the national average, the reading levels are high and writing is weaker, only just in line with what is expected.

75. Over the last five years the school has worked hard to narrow the gap between the performance of boys and girls and now there is little noticeable difference in the national tests. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress and regularly meet and sometimes surpass the literacy targets set for them. This is due to careful assessment and strong teaching.
76. By the age of seven, the pupils' standards of speaking and listening are above average and they answer and ask questions appropriately in full sentences. They explain the work they are doing clearly, and explain their opinions and ideas about stories and books with enthusiasm. Teachers encourage their pupils to develop their spoken vocabulary. Through careful questioning, the pupils are encouraged to support each other in finding different words and sounds and to give reasons for their choices. Vocabulary is extended effectively in classes where the teacher uses a range of resources including music and varied careful questioning to encourage pupils to express their ideas and feelings accurately.
77. By the age of 11 the majority of pupils speak and listen confidently in a wide range of contexts. They take an active part in discussions and report on their work to the whole class in plenary sessions. They respond well when invited to develop ideas for words to show atmosphere. Pupils share ideas and collaborate effectively. Opportunities for speaking and listening occur regularly in most areas of the curriculum including assemblies and circle time. Listening is particularly well developed in some classes where teachers encourage pupils to respond and comment on the content of classmates' presentations and texts. Standards in speaking and listening are high because most teachers provide frequent opportunities for pupils to develop these skills. It results in good learning in lessons and good achievement. In a small minority of lessons this does not happen and pupils' listening skills are not so well developed. Well trained and experienced classroom assistants support with pupils who are learning English as an additional language and those with special educational needs. They ensure that the pupils understand instructions, and help them to contribute to any discussion. As pupils become more confident they make good progress in this area, often rapidly becoming independent and working without support.
78. By the age of seven most pupils read a range of texts with fluency and accuracy and some have remarkably good expression. They attempt unknown words using letter sounds and use contextual clues to understand the meaning and sequence of texts. Teachers use the National Literacy Strategy well to help pupils consistently focus on letter and sound patterns and an awareness of the combination of sounds which has a positive and direct impact on reading standards. Lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs benefit from a range of initiatives within the school specifically designed to support reading including extra literacy support. Pupils show their excitement and pleasure in books and are eager to discuss their favourite ones.
79. By the age of 11 above average pupils are developing a critical appreciation of a range of books and are able to talk thoughtfully about different authors. For example, above average readers in Year 6 spoke with delight about their enjoyment in reading *The Hobbit*. They discussed the series of Harry Potter books perceptively, showing exactly why they were so popular and the appeal to pupils of their age. They retold the story and characters in *Pilgrim's Progress* and recounted that they had found it hard but rewarding. Most pupils talk enthusiastically of their favourite books and can recall the plot and characters in good detail. They are familiar with the organisation of non-fiction books and use the contents and index page to find information. They are skilful at finding the information they need from different sources. Reading is well managed with improving provision for guided reading and good support from parents. The literacy governor comes in regularly to work in the library and has a good overview of the pupils' work in literacy. A Book Week held every year provides very good opportunities for pupils to meet and hear published

authors and poets, to listen to storytellers and to take part in a week of reading, discussing and learning about books.

80. Writing is mainly sound - satisfactory achievement for the majority of pupils. Most seven-year-olds write carefully with appropriate vocabulary and some write in sufficient detail to engage the reader. Many pupils struggle with the mechanics of writing in terms of handwriting and presentation of work and accuracy in punctuation and spelling. In English where teachers have worked hard with pupils in this area with special handwriting and spelling lessons there are signs of improvement. However teachers do not exact the same standards in pupils writing in all classes in other subjects and there is no consistency of practice. A whole school policy for literacy would help to reflect the quality of presentation and accuracy necessary for standards in writing to rise. By the age of 11, pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of grammar and punctuation, but spelling is weak. Pupils' writing is coherent and organised with sound structure. For example, when they wrote the final section of a bus journey through hilly countryside in India much work showed a perceptive continuation of the author's style in pupils' use of exciting vocabulary and carefully planned sequencing of events. Standards of handwriting have improved and many write in joined up evenly formed clear script. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in developing their writing skills due to careful in class support and appropriate tasks. The challenge now is to improve the achievement of the most able pupils in writing.
80. Teaching is broadly good across the school although there are variations in teachers' skills. Over half the teaching seen was good, one lesson was very good and there were no unsatisfactory lessons. Average and below average pupils learn well, but above average pupils are not sufficiently challenged in some lessons. In the best lessons teaching is lively and enthusiastic and teachers use a rich and varied vocabulary to stimulate pupils interest in new words. In one lesson the teacher made very good use of the best of pupils writing to show what caught the readers interest. She encouraged pupils to use detailed and richly descriptive language using their examples with her own to develop their narrative writing. Teachers use resources well to stimulate interest and help pupils understand exactly what they are required to do. In many lessons the overhead projector is used well by both teachers and pupils to make presentations, to underline key concepts and to provide opportunities for pupils to 'read between the lines' of texts to understand characters. The end of lessons is used well to share and reinforce what pupils have learnt during the lesson and to encourage pupils to think about what they need to learn next.
81. Teachers' skills in planning and organisation are good and the influence of the National Literacy Strategy is very evident. However some teachers do not provide a high enough level of planned challenge for above average pupils in their lessons. It is this factor that is limiting the achievement of more able pupils in writing. The school is aware of this and is beginning to put in place strategies to provide challenge for above average pupils. Teachers are also focusing on improving aspects of the teaching of writing. Although this at an early point of development there is evidence already of some improvement and over time it should have an impact on standards in writing.
82. Pupils with special educational needs have detailed individual education plans, which are followed in detail, and they make good progress through focused, specific teaching. Individual and group work for pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language is well planned and supported in lessons by experienced classroom assistants.
83. The literacy co-ordinator manages the subject well. The Additional Literacy Scheme (ALS) has been introduced and found very successful together with booster classes for Year 6 pupils. Assessment is used to identify trends and set targets, for example to identify pupils for extra support in literacy. A system of monitoring writing and verifying levels involving all teachers is underway and a portfolio of pupils writing clearly showing levels is almost complete. The co-ordinator has begun to use pupils' past test scores to project their likely attainment in future tests. This form of analysis is beginning to have an impact on planning and teaching but it is still at an early stage and needs further development. There has been sound improvement since the last inspection in increased resources, particularly the supply and quality of books and the more

up to date materials to develop higher reading skills in older pupils. This has had a good impact on reading standards in English.

## **MATHEMATICS**

84. Standards in both key stages have been broadly maintained since the last inspection. However, changes in the statistical methods used to measure standards in tests have made detailed comparisons complex. At the time of the last inspection, the numbers of pupils reaching set levels, level 2 at Key Stage 1 and level 4 at Key Stage 2, were the basis of judgements. Standards were broadly average at the end of Key Stage 1 and were above average at the end of Key Stage 2. Now statistical comparison is done by averaging pupils' total points score rather than simply counting the number who attain the expected national curriculum Level. This has repercussions for both key stages as explained below.
85. In the national tests for seven year-olds in 2000, the proportion of pupils attaining the expected Level 2 or above was above the national average. However, a higher than average proportion only just scraped into the Level 2 category on the lowest of the three rungs of the Level 2 scale. Consequently, the average points score gained by pupils was below the national average, and below the average for similar schools. This has been the case for each of the last five years. However, a worrying feature in the 2000 tests was the lower than average proportion gaining the higher Level 3; a trend that is also evident over previous years. This is worrying because it shows that some pupils, and particularly higher attaining pupils, are not achieving as well as they should. The need to challenge higher attaining pupils has been recognised by the school as a target on its development planning.
86. Despite some concerns about standards in test results, there are some positive features. Over the last couple of years, the gap between boys' and girls' results has been narrowing and in 2000, boys' average points score was above that of girls for the first time. Another positive feature is the good achievement by pupils with special educational needs. These pupils match the targets set for them in individual education plans as a result of the beneficial help given to them by teachers and support assistants. Pupils' competence in using computers to support their mathematics learning is unsatisfactory. Even though the school is short of computers, insufficient opportunities are taken to use those that are available.
87. In the national tests for eleven year-olds in 2000, the proportion of pupils gaining the expected Level 4 and above exceeded the national average, and was above that of similar schools. However, the average points score gained by pupils in the tests was close to the national average and close to that of similar schools. The discrepancy occurs because a significant minority of pupils scored below level 3. The proportion attaining the higher Level 5 was in line with the national average, with clear signs of improvement in the year 2000 SAT's compared to previous years. This shows that there is some challenge for higher attaining pupils in this key stage, although inspection evidence shows that this is not consistently good across all classes. When tracking pupils' performance from Key Stage 1 to Key Stage 2, performance was in line with expected trends, showing that pupils' achievement during Key Stage 2 has been satisfactory. Over the last five years, the gap between the performance of boys and girls has narrowed, with little difference noticeable in the 2000 national tests. Pupils with special educational needs continue to have helpful support in Key Stage 2, and so achieve well making good progress in individual lessons and over time. As in Key Stage 1, pupils' proficiency at using computers to assist their progress in mathematics is unsatisfactory.
88. In work seen at the end of Key Stage 1, Year 2 pupils broadly match the average national expectations for this age group. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory; they come in with average attainment in mathematics and end the key stage with average attainment. Effective use of the National Numeracy Strategy materials help pupils to use the language of mathematics with sound understanding and most pupils apply their understanding satisfactorily to day-to-day situations. Most average and below average pupils respond well to mental mathematics sessions, where the teacher fires rapid questions that make pupils think and respond quickly. Pupils, who are eager to

get the right answer to questions, enjoy this. However, some mental mathematics questions, and some of the written problems that are set, do not fully challenge the higher attaining pupils. In one class, for instance, the teacher aimed questions towards those with average skills and failed to ask more challenging questions of the higher attaining pupils. As a result, these pupils were not stretched fully and failed to make sufficient progress. This lack of real challenge is a contributory factor towards pupils not attaining the higher Level 3 when they sit their national tests at the end of Year 2. However, pupils who have special educational needs are well supported, achieving well over time and in individual lessons. This is because teachers tell them how to improve and give them good feedback that helps them to know they are improving. The marking of higher attaining pupils' work is invariably positive, but does not always set further ambitious targets for them to strive towards.

89. In work seen at the end of Key Stage 2, most pupils confidently tackle work at Level 4 of the National Curriculum and a smaller number are conversant with some aspects of Level 5, which is higher than the expected standard for this age group. Standards are average overall. A scrutiny of work over the course of the last year shows that pupils in Year 6 achieve satisfactorily, making sound progress in their understanding of fractions, decimals and percentages. In a lesson, they struggled to explain the difference between ratio and proportion, but were able to apply successfully some of the underlying principles. Lower attaining pupils made good progress as a result of the helpful support provided by the learning support assistant. In a different class, pupils in Year 5 and Year 6 made good progress in the lesson as a result of questions that tested the understanding of the whole ability range in the class. In the mental mathematics part of the lesson, average attainers instantly worked out two-thirds of 12, whilst higher attainers responded equally rapidly when asked to calculate three-tenths of 500 grams. In the same class, pupils have produced accurate graphs to represent sets of data. They have done this using computers both to present and interpret the data. Teachers recognise that pupils do not always apply their mathematical understanding to day-to day situations as successfully as they should. Whilst pupils understand discrete mathematical processes, they are slow to apply these to new situations. Teachers are giving them more help to do this, as this should improve their overall rating in the national tests.
90. Whilst pupils' mathematics understanding is frequently reinforced in other lessons, for instance in science and design technology, this is not always to the level of difficulty required to support the work being done in mathematics lessons. As a result, opportunities to build on what is done in mathematics lessons are lost. This is apparent in some lessons in both key stages, although good support for mathematics work was seen in a Year 6 science lesson.
91. The quality of teaching is satisfactory in both key stages. Only one unsatisfactory lesson was seen when the teacher had over ambitious expectations of pupils and they failed to understand what was expected. This was an isolated example in a class that is otherwise making sound progress in their understanding. Teachers understand the National Numeracy Strategy well and apply its techniques successfully. As a result, pupils acquire new knowledge systematically with sound continuity to their learning. Teachers generally plan well, although at times there is insufficient consideration given to the needs of higher attaining pupils. As a result these pupils do not always learn as well as they should. As discussed above, this is particularly evident in Key Stage 1. Planning is effective for most pupils, whose learning benefits from the clear structure given to lessons. Teachers manage pupils well. In a Year 5 lesson, for instance, the teacher managed a lively class well by asking quick-fire questions that kept the pupils on their toes, with little time for idle chatter or silliness. Consequently, learning in this class, and in most other classes, is done in a stress free atmosphere, with pupils doing as they are told and enjoying lessons. Marking of pupils' work is often supportive, identifying what is done well as well as what needs improving. When this happens, pupils have a clear understanding of their own progress. However, a scrutiny of work shows that is not always the case. In one Key Stage 1 class, for instance, many worksheets completed by pupils contained little or no helpful comments by the teacher. Also, poor presentation, grammatical inaccuracies and weak spelling went uncorrected. This has resulted in a sloppy attitude to work and a falling off of standards as pupils approach their national tests. Whilst teachers make effective use of most resources they do not make

enough use of available computers. This means that pupils do not always use mathematics applications to support independent learning.

92. The management of the subject is good. The subject co-ordinator monitors the quality of teaching and learning in colleagues' classes and provides support and advice when they need help. The National Numeracy Strategy has been successfully implemented and staff are growing more confident in using the various materials that support the strategy. There have been sound improvements since the last inspection; most teachers are beginning to use everyday teaching examples to bring the subject alive, although this is not the case in every lesson. Assessment now clearly identifies weaknesses in learning and teachers are becoming more skilled in targeting learning.

## SCIENCE

93. In 2000 national tests for seven-year-olds, standards of attainment in the teacher assessments were below average. All pupils entered attained the nationally expected standard, Level 2, but when their results are compared to other schools nationally, pupils' attainment is below average. This is because too few pupils attained the higher Level 3 standard - 11 per cent compared with 22 per cent nationally. Inspection evidence for the current Year 2 pupils indicates a similar position this year with pupils attaining levels in-line with national expectations but too few attaining Level 3. This is a similar position to the last inspection when attainment was judged to be broadly average but there was some lack of challenge for higher attaining pupils.
94. The 2000 national test results for eleven-year-olds, show that standards were above the national average last year with 58 per cent of pupils attaining the higher Level 5. The percentage of pupils attaining this higher level was well above the national average of 34 per cent and above average when compared to similar schools nationally. Over the last two years there has been a steady trend of improvement in science. Boys' performance over the three years 1998 to 2000 has exceeded the national average and is above that of girls'.
95. Currently, inspection evidence shows that at both key stages, standards are broadly average, but comparatively better at Key Stage 2 than at Key Stage 1. Since the last inspection the quality of teaching has improved and this was reflected in the higher standards at Key Stage 2 in the 2000 tests. Although, with a different cohort of pupils, standards will not be as high this year, pupils are still achieving well at Key Stage 2. A scheme of work has been successfully implemented, which is helping teachers to plan their work more thoroughly especially in the scientific enquiry areas of the curriculum. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported. Work is adapted and modified to meet their specific needs and most are making good progress through the school. Achievement overall is satisfactory at Key Stage 1. The lower and middle attainers make better progress than the higher attaining pupils, who are still underachieving at the end of Key Stage 1. This is because not enough work is being set to challenge the needs of this group. The school's assessment procedures in science are not thorough or detailed enough to spot and target their needs. The time allocated to the teaching of science has been increased and it is satisfactory at Key Stage 2 but is still insufficient at Key Stage 1.
96. The analysis of pupils' work shows that they are regularly involved in investigative work. From an early age, skills of prediction, fair testing and recording are well taught; these skills develop further as pupils move through the school. By the time they are 11, most pupils realise that scientific evidence has to be studied before conclusions can be drawn. Seven-year-old pupils, are developing a secure understanding about the growth of plants. They listen carefully as the teacher shows them some dandelions she has brought from home. Good questioning enables the pupils to compare the root growth of the youngest and oldest plants. Pupils achieve well in this lesson and the good use of resources helps them to understand the effect of light, water and temperature on plant growth. Pupils with special educational needs work well with the learning support assistant using the computer to trace the life cycle of a seed. By the time they are 11, pupils are far more independent and much less reliant upon the teacher when carrying out investigative work. In Year 6, for example, pupils are challenged to produce accurate work and plan an experiment

about light and shadow. Most pupils soon discover that the closer the object is to the light source the larger the shadow. However, the higher attainers quickly realise that the easiest way to record their results is to produce a line graph. Some pupils use the computers effectively for this purpose.

97. Teaching and learning are good overall at both key stages. Of the five lessons observed, teaching in one was very good, it was good in three and in one, teaching was satisfactory. Features of the very good teaching are the open-ended questioning; for example, 'What would happen if . . .' and 'Why do you think . . .' were significant factors in the pupils' positive responses to their learning. In the best lessons, through probing questioning, teachers encourage pupils to become more analytical; for example, in Year 3 when discussing the difference between drugs and medicine and the effects of smoking and alcohol. Other strengths in teaching are the management of most teachers and their secure subject knowledge, which enables them to give clear explanations to pupils. There are particularly good links with mathematics and English in the recording of scientific investigations. The teaching of scientific language receives particularly good emphasis. Support assistants have clearly identified roles and work effectively with teachers. This has contributed significantly to the good progress of pupils with special educational needs. Teachers are starting to make use of information and communication technology for research and recording the results of investigations; however, this work is limited because of the restricted access to computers.
98. Pupils have good attitudes to their work and enjoy science. They particularly like experimental work. During all lessons, good relationships are established between pupils and teachers and this is reflected in the pupils' good behaviour. They are co-operative and respectful to one another.
99. The science co-ordinator is well qualified and able to give effective help to other members of staff with their planning and ensuring resources are available for the science curriculum. Assessment systems are in place but there is insufficient monitoring of the pupils' work at Key Stage 1 where there is a need to provide more suitable work to extend higher attaining pupils. Resources for science are satisfactory and these are used effectively to support the pupils' learning.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

100. Very little teaching was seen in art and so judgements are based on a scrutiny of pupils' work and conversations with staff and pupils. Standards in art are average for seven year-olds at the end of Key Stage 1, and are also average when pupils leave the school at aged 11. Over the length of time they are in school, pupils achieve satisfactorily, making the progress expected of them. This is the case for all pupils, irrespective of their prior attainment. Special educational needs pupils achieve satisfactorily because they are given effective support in class by specialist assistants, and higher attaining pupils also achieve satisfactorily as a result of work that suitably challenges and extends them. There is no difference between the progress of boys and girls.
101. By the age of seven, the majority of pupils have reached the expected Level 2 of the National Curriculum. Year 2 pupils in one class have completed bold relief sculptures that depict various parts of the school. These are quite large and required the pupils to work over a number of lessons. To do this, pupils started from a baseboard, they used tin foil to build up the relief and papier maché to add substance and further decorative elements to the pieces before painting them. The painting was done in eye-catching colours so that the finished products are attractive to look at. The pupils learnt a lot from this project because they had to complete preliminary observational drawings of the areas they were to sculpt. Whilst some chose the front of the school, others chose the classroom and flower bank area. The pupils successfully translated their initial drawings into the full three dimensional relief sculptures, and in the process learnt a lot about the qualities of different media. A younger class have produced colourful mobiles using cut outs of fish. They successfully replicated the appearance of scales by cutting zigzag lines into the body of the fish. In these ways, pupils learnt that a little ingenuity can result in ornamental results that are attractive to look at and which brighten up a room.

102. By the age of eleven, pupils have reached Level 4 of the National Curriculum and some are attempting more advanced Level 5 work. In one Year 6 class, pupils produced carefully painted landscapes. In doing this, pupils successfully used a restricted palette, having to think carefully about how to create visual interest without using contrasting ranges of colour. They created interest by using the space on the page well and by creating contrast between the sky and the earth. Some pupils successfully incorporated lessons learnt about perspective to add depth to their pictures. The same class have also produced effective silhouettes against a colour wash sky. Whilst some of these pieces are effective, not all pupils ensured an even gradation of colour, and so the finished pictures are not as visually calming as they might be. Nevertheless, the pupils clearly learnt a lot about the even and careful application of paint to produce a desired affect.
103. Insufficient teaching was seen to form a secure judgement about its quality. Nevertheless, teachers choose interesting projects that catch pupils' attention and interest. Projects such as the relief sculptures produced by Year 2 help pupils to feel successful at what they are doing without having to emphasize highly developed technique. As a result, pupils learn well, because the lessons are interesting and result in things that they can be proud of. Teachers successfully use a wider range of resources than were used in the last inspection. A tour of classrooms revealed successful use of paint and pencil, good quality Celtic prints in Year 5 and 6 and aeroplane mobiles made from found articles in Year 3. This last project successfully supported the pupils' history topic work on the 2<sup>nd</sup> World War.
104. Teachers have displayed ingenuity and enterprise despite the co-ordinator for art not being given the time to monitor standards of teaching, although the co-ordinator does keep an eye on what is taught from a distance to ensure there is no replication of projects across or between years. The school have recently successfully introduced a nationally recognised scheme of work, which is providing new ways of working. This scheme also provides assessment ideas, although all teachers do not yet use these effectively. As a result, pupils are not always as clear as they could be about what they have to do to improve their standards of work. There has been a satisfactory response to the issues for development identified in the last inspection. There is a wider curriculum and the subject leaders role is now being developed to provide better co-ordination of planning and support to teachers.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

105. Standards are in line with the national average at the end of both key stages. They are better now than when the school was last inspected due to increased knowledge and confidence in teaching and more relevant and higher quality resources. It was only possible to see lessons in Key Stage 2 during the inspection as younger pupils' lessons take place in the second half of the term. An analysis of work on display, pupils' folders and discussions with teachers and pupils show that pupils undertake a satisfactory range of activities in which they design make and evaluate products. Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) and those who speak English as an additional language make satisfactory and sometimes good progress. Achievement is satisfactory overall.
106. By the age of seven, pupils design and make products using a range of recycled materials, card and textiles. They create designs that are labelled indicating the materials they are going to use. For example pupils in year 2, having investigated many different types of commercial puppets and their use. They designed their own puppets recording a list of preferred materials. Pupils made display boards showing how they tested the best way of joining the puppet's body. They made patterns and template from their designs and then made the puppets according to their chosen method. At this stage parents came in to help. Good skills were developed in cutting sticking, pinning and stapling. Higher attaining pupils prepare good designs and work independently. They evaluate their work well and look at each other's, with a critical eye. Pupils with special educational needs made good progress in developing their designs and in evaluating their puppets with some support from the classroom assistants. Pupils use associated technical vocabulary well and talk about chassis, axles and hinges when describing their designs.

107. 11 year olds create detailed, labelled plans with accompanying explanations of the equipment they are going to use and what they are going to make. For example, when designing structures to house decorated eggs they consider how they are going to make them strong, the materials they will use and the methods of joining which will be most effective. They design robots and investigate ways in which they can incorporate pneumatic energy into their designs to make some parts move. They work with a range of materials including wood and metal to make artefacts for their humanities projects. In one Year 3 lesson pupils designed and decorated copper medallions to link with their history work on the Romans. They used tools with due regard to safety and were aware of the properties of the materials used. When working with wood they mark, cut, join and assemble with increasing precision. Pupils evaluate their products carefully and make adjustments and corrections to their original designs and record clear explanations for their changes.
108. There was insufficient evidence to make a judgement on the quality of teaching in Key Stage 1, but teaching is good in Key Stage 2. Although only a limited number of lessons were seen, recent training and increased resources for the subject have had a strong impact on teaching and learning and over time will have a greater impact on standards. In most lessons succinct, clear explanations ensure pupils know exactly what they have to do. Teachers' increased subject knowledge and range of techniques gives them confidence in demonstrations and pupils respond with enthusiasm. The pace of lessons is appropriate and expectations of behaviour and routines are well established. In response pupils listen intently, behave well and try hard to do their work. Teachers give pupils good opportunities to choose their own resources and this promotes their independence well. Throughout lessons there is evidence of good relationships between pupils and they share resources and help each other with their work.
109. The co-ordinator works hard to encourage and support other teachers and has been influential in improving standards since the last inspection. She ensures good practice is shared more widely and extends the training and support to ensure all teachers are confident in teaching the subject. Since last inspection a policy document has been written and the school has adopted the QCA scheme of work. Medium and long term planning is good and provides a secure framework for the development of pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding. However assessment is at an early point of development and there are inconsistencies in teacher assessment so that pupils do not always get the help they need to improve. Computer programmes are not yet being used effectively to support and enrich pupils learning in this subject.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

110. It was possible to see only two lessons during the inspection. As a result, there was insufficient evidence to make a reliable judgement on the quality of teaching. Judgements about standards and the curriculum are therefore based on scrutiny of work, display and planning and discussion with the co-ordinator. Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 is in line with the national average, although there is a weakness in map-making and route-finding. Pupils achieve appropriately and this is a very similar picture to the previous inspection. Throughout the key stage, pupils make at least sound progress in their knowledge and understanding of the subject, although geographical skills are not sufficiently developed; for example, there is no formal study of mapping but it is implicit in topics like a traffic survey. Effective and attractive wall displays encourage the pupils' levels of motivation. In the lesson seen, the majority of pupils looked carefully at the photographs of a Mexican village, describing what they saw and discussing the similarities and differences in comparison with Dover. They vividly and accurately recall the various kinds of work carried out in the village; for example, making masks for festivals, fishing and farming. The relatively small body of recorded past work shows that pupils have developed a knowledge and understanding of the effects of pollution on the environment. There is some evidence that pupils have done their own research in their independent writing on this topic. Younger pupils gain an understanding of the world globe when 'Barnaby Bear' goes on holiday and sends back postcards.
111. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' attainment is below the national average, particularly in geographical skills. This is because the school has been concentrating on literacy and



numeracy in the last few years. Pupils' progress is unsatisfactory, although throughout the key stage pupils further their understanding of the position of Dover, England and the United Kingdom in the world. However, in the one lesson seen at the end of the key stage, pupils' attainment was above average. The majority of pupils know that Canterbury is a city, Maidstone is the county town and that Dover is a port. They thoughtfully discussed the reasons why half a million people come to Dover each year and know that the Castle is a tourist attraction. They had a very good understanding of traffic problems in the High Street and what makes it a good place to carry out a traffic survey. The small amount of completed work shows a satisfactory understanding of mountains, rivers and the water cycle, with a little extended writing. Achievement is unsatisfactory because pupils have insufficient opportunity to extend and deepen their knowledge and understanding, and to develop their geographical skills. However, the school is planning this for the near future by basing the curriculum on appropriate national guidance and this has not yet had time to impact upon standards.

112. The subject is taught alternately with history in a topic cycle. A residential visit and some fieldwork support learning well. The co-ordinator has a good knowledge and understanding of the role, but this is not effectively exercised in terms of monitoring and evaluating provision and teaching because of a lack of non-contact time. There are no formal procedures for assessment, but some teachers do a brief evaluation at the end of topics to help with reporting to parents. Resources have improved since the previous inspection and are now adequate although the collection of artefacts is rather small.

## HISTORY

113. It was only possible to see one lesson during the inspection and judgements are therefore based on the scrutiny of work, display and planning and discussion with the co-ordinator. The evidence shows that attainment is average and pupils are achieving as they should. There was insufficient evidence to make an overall judgement on the quality of teaching but that seen in the one lesson observed in Year 1 was very good, leading to good progress during the session.
114. The attainment of pupils in Key Stage 1 is in line with the national average, although there is little evidence of independent writing with much work copied from a common source for pupils of all abilities. Pupils have made studies of famous people, including Louis Braille and Queen Elizabeth the First, correctly sequencing events in their lives. Their writing in the form of an explorer's diary whilst at sea gives some period flavour. Brief writing on the Great Fire of London shows a basic knowledge and understanding of events, which are successfully recounted. In the Year 1 lesson seen, however, attainment was well above the national average. The majority of pupils understood and explained why people have holidays and how they have differed in the past; for example, staying at home instead of travelling abroad, and simply resting after the harvest. Higher attaining pupils know that colour in photographs, electronic games and bathing costumes all indicate the present rather than the past. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and lower attainers, correctly sequenced a series of photographs, and convincingly justified their difficult choices with good reasoning. The teacher led the discussion very well, giving pupils' ample opportunity through questioning to display their knowledge and understanding of what history is – 'things that happened a long time ago.' This class had carried out a homework task, researching holidays over the generations of their families, which made an effective contribution to their learning.
115. By the end of Key Stage 2, scrutiny of past work shows attainment in line with the national average and that pupils make satisfactory progress. Pupils' work on the Tudor voyages of exploration shows their understanding of why explorations take place and what areas are now left; for example, outer space. Their study of the Victorians shows some independent research and writing with good empathic writing as a Victorian schoolchild which gives a clear flavour of the period and shows satisfactory knowledge and understanding of the time. Pupils of all abilities have carried out their own research on aspects of Dover's history since 1935, contrasting and comparing with today topics such as population, transport, war-time refugees, the fire service, and modern asylum-seekers. There is some limited evidence of working with artefacts. Pupils,

including those with special educational needs, are achieving as they should and standards have been maintained since the previous inspection.

116. The co-ordinator has a good knowledge and understanding of the role and knows what needs to be done to re-establish the subject firmly in the curriculum. However, the exercise of the role is hampered by a lack of regular non-contact time for going into classes to support and work alongside colleagues. The curriculum is enhanced through the use of role-play; for example as Victorian schoolchildren or World War II evacuees. Good use is made of visits to local museums and places of historical interest, but visits further afield are not possible because of the costs involved. The school also makes use of local residents and families as oral witnesses to the history of Dover. Resources are adequate for Key Stage 1, and good for Key Stage 2 and there is a small, but growing, collection of artefacts for the teaching of the skills of historical enquiry and investigation. Software for information and communication technology in history is improving steadily. Procedures for assessment are very variable since there are no formal procedures, but some teachers keep records to assist with reporting to parents.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

117. Pupils' standards of attainment are below average and achievement is unsatisfactory. When pupils leave for secondary school at the end of Key Stage 2, the majority will not be competent users of information and communication technology. This is because the school does not have enough computers and therefore pupils' access is very restricted. This is the same as the judgement made at the time of last inspection. However, since the last inspection, progress has been made in training staff and replacing all the obsolete machines. The new computers that have been purchased are compatible throughout the school and there is sufficient appropriate software. A policy and scheme of work have been introduced and governors have earmarked funding for a new computer suite and building work has commenced. Information and communication technology is therefore very much a developing subject, albeit from a very low base. The school has made improvements but there have, at the same time, been major changes nationally. As a result there is still more to be done.
118. Currently, pupils do not get enough 'hands on' experience to develop their skills. Although standards of attainment of the substantial majority of pupils are below the national average, when pupils have the opportunity to use computers they are enthusiastic and achieve well. The majority listen carefully, co-operate well together and follow instructions sensibly. They treat the equipment with care and their behaviour is good. The scrutiny of pupils' work shows that teachers are making full use of the limited resources available to them. Some good work was seen in all classes, which included word processing, importing graphics to text, data handling, e-mail, spreadsheets and personal presentations in Year 6. Year 2 have worked closely with another school on a 'Monster' project and liaised with them using e-mail. The cross-curricular use of information and communication technology is developing satisfactorily in some subjects. Good work was observed in science where bar and pie charts are used to record results of investigations and in geography and history where CD-ROMs are used for research in some classes.
119. Insufficient teaching was observed to make an overall judgement about the quality of teaching. Interviews and conversations with teachers show that they are enthusiastic and eager to have better access to computers so that they can put their recent training into practise. The school acknowledges that there will also be new training needs for most staff when the computer suite is operational next term. These have been identified as: use of the scanner; Internet; e-mail and control technology.
120. The headteacher is co-ordinating information and communication technology and she is very keen that it should be established as an integral part of the curriculum. The school improvement plan and conversations with the co-ordinator confirm that plans are well in hand to move this subject forwards.

## MUSIC

121. Very little teaching was seen in music and so judgements are drawn from conversations with pupils and teachers, and through attendance at rehearsals and an assembly performance. Standards in music are average for seven year-olds at the end of Key Stage 1, and are also average when pupils leave the school at aged 11. Over the length of time they are in school, pupils achieve satisfactorily, making the progress expected of them. This is the case for all pupils, irrespective of their prior attainment. Special educational needs pupils achieve satisfactorily, because they are given practical based work that they enjoy, and higher attaining pupils also achieve satisfactorily as a result of work that suitably challenges and extends them. Those pupils who have instrumental lessons from visiting teachers achieve well, making above average progress as a result of regular opportunities to play together. There is no difference between the progress of boys and girls.
122. By the age of seven, the majority of pupils have reached Level 2 of the National Curriculum. They sing well with accurate intonation and clear diction. In their class music lessons, pupils perform on percussion instruments, providing supportive accompaniments to songs. Pupils listen appreciatively to pieces of music, which they discuss using a gradually enlarging vocabulary of descriptive and musical terms. By the age of eleven, pupils have reached Level 4 of the National Curriculum, although only pupils who learn band instruments attain more advanced Level 5 standards. Progress in singing is evident, with pupils securely developing a wider range of pitch. In assembly, for instance, pupils reached high-pitched notes with clarity and precision. Their singing was confident, full bodied and rhythmically accurate in songs that included some intricate syncopated embellishments. In one assembly the school band provided a well-rehearsed performance of two contrasting items. The band contained an assortment of wind and brass instruments as well as drum kit and a range of percussion. They played with good ensemble and a sense of style. Their efforts drew well-deserved applause from the appreciative audience. Although the inspectors arrived after the weekly choir practice, children spoke with enthusiasm about the varied repertoire and were clearly proud of the standards produced.
123. Insufficient teaching was seen to arrive at a judgement about its quality. Nevertheless, teachers provide regular weekly lessons of music and are gaining confidence in using the revised scheme. Teachers plan satisfactorily for these sessions, ensuring that they have an appropriate range of resources. Most lessons are practically based, ensuring that pupils learn from doing rather than listening or discussing. As a result, pupils learn in an enthusiastic atmosphere. Discussions show that teachers lack some skill in developing pupils' skills at composing. This is because not all teachers feel confident when introducing the simple structures of composition such as ostinato, improvisation and drone. Nevertheless, teachers are willing to try new ideas and are keen to improve their own musical skills
124. The co-ordinator for music provides successful direction of extra curricular activities that include the school choir and band, as well as regular performances to parents and others in the local community, including the elderly. She leads weekly hymn practices and successfully contributes to the organisation of regular events that are held in the church. Some issues from the previous inspection have not been fully resolved – for example, there is insufficient attempt to measure pupils' growing confidence in music making in order to accurately identify where improvements can be made. The co-ordinator has not yet had time to monitor colleagues work or the impact the new syllabus is having in classrooms. An opportunity for this is planned for the second half of term.

## PHYSICAL EDUCATION

125. Standards in physical education are average. These standards have been maintained since the last inspection. As they move through the school, most pupils achieve satisfactory levels in all aspects of physical education, with a few pupils achieving standards that are good. Pupils with special educational needs are fully included and they enjoy physical education lessons; most

achieve well and are well supported. All pupils have equal access to the curriculum and there are no apparent differences in the performances of boys and girls.

126. Two lessons were observed at Key Stage 2 during the inspection. Teaching is good at Key Stage 2, but there was not enough evidence to make a judgement at Key Stage 1. Warm up sessions are mostly well led by teachers; for example, the specialist teacher questioned the pupils effectively to ensure that they were clear about the purpose of the warm-up. She provided a good example for the pupils to follow, starting with stretching and flexing exercises and gradually building up the tempo to finish with star jumps and jogging exercises. In another lesson the teacher was confident enough to let a pupil lead the class through the warm-up routine.
127. Skills are taught well. During a lesson on fielding skills, the teacher successfully used two higher attaining pupils to demonstrate the necessity of moving sideways, backwards or forwards towards the ball to make catching easier when the throw is not accurate. By the age of 11, most pupils are much better co-ordinated. For example, following a good teacher demonstration of the triple jump, the majority quickly learned the 'hop, step and jump' routine. Higher attainers showed particularly good rhythm in their movements and got height into their jumps. In a very good Year 6 athletics lesson, the pupils were working on the challenges presented by the Amateur Athletic Association 5 Star Award Scheme. The teacher was able to demonstrate the skills involved when throwing the javelin, which enabled pupils to work purposefully and begin to develop their technical skills. Another group worked very hard to improve their sprinting technique over a short 6 x 10 metre distance, competing with themselves to better their time.
128. Pupils dress appropriately and most change quickly for their lessons. They enjoy physical education and by the time they reach the upper part of the school they work co-operatively together. The majority of pupils are keen and eager to participate in lessons and their behaviour is mostly good. On a few occasions, too much chattering means that time is wasted by having to stop lessons and remind pupils of how to behave. Almost all pupils are able to swim at least 25 metres by the time they leave school.
129. Physical education is well led. The co-ordinator is a specialist teacher and is therefore able to give effective help to other staff. Currently, further work is required to complete the scheme of work and improve assessment procedures. However, no time is allocated to the co-ordinator for monitoring and she manages two other subjects. The teaching time for physical education is high when compared to other primary schools nationally. Pupils participate in competitive football, netball, swimming and athletics matches. St Mary's organises and runs a swimming gala for all Dover primary schools. Parents are effectively involved in helping with clubs, swimming and school matches.