

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **ICKLESHAM CEP SCHOOL**

Icklesham

Winchelsea

LEA area: East Sussex

Unique reference number: 114527

Headteacher: Mrs P J Higgs

Reporting inspector: Kevin Hodge  
18466

Dates of inspection: 21 – 23 May 2002

Inspection number: 194699

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

School category: Voluntary controlled

Age range of pupils: 4 to 11 years

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Icklesham CEP School  
High Fords  
Icklesham  
Winchelsea  
East Sussex

Postcode: TN36 4BX

Telephone number: 01424 814448

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Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mrs Sandra Goodsell

Date of previous inspection: June 1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
18466	Kevin Hodge	Registered inspector	English Information and Communication Technology Music Physical Education English as an additional language Equal Opportunities	What sort of school is it?  How high are standards – the school's results and pupils' achievements  How well are the pupils taught?  What the school should do to improve further?
9537	Caroline Marden	Lay inspector		How high are standards? - Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development  How well does the school care for its pupils?  How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
27714	Sheila Wilding	Team inspector	The Foundation Stage Mathematics Art and Design Religious Education	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
12155	Peter Payne	Team inspector	Science Design and Technology Geography History Special educational needs	How well is the school led and managed?

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

The school is situated within the village, a short distance from the main road between Winchelsea and Hastings. There are 118 pupils on roll arranged in five classes. During the last year, 15 pupils left the school and 17 arrived. There are 33 children on the special needs register, and there are six pupils that have statements of special educational needs. Approximately 22 percent of the pupils receive free school meals, which is below average. Very few pupils, approximately three percent, come from ethnic minorities, and only one pupil speaks English as an additional language. Most classes have more than one age group. The Year 1 class children are currently being taught in the hall. The school serves mainly the local village, although some pupils come from a wider area. The pupils come from a variety of socio-economic backgrounds. The pupils come to the school with a wide range of ability, although their levels of language and literacy are below the county average. Building extension work caused significant disruption to the daily routines of the school during the inspection. The school has a variety of aims, highlighted within its vision statement. It expects its pupils to learn, be happy, achieve well, value others, be caring, be kept safe, and be well behaved.

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

The school provides a good education for its pupils in a very caring environment, where each child is valued highly. The headteacher provides very good direction to the work of the school. The governing body gives clear purpose and it supports the school well. In the Foundation Stage children receive a good start to their education, and they reach the expected standards by time they enter the Year 1 class. By the time the pupils are seven and eleven, they reach the expected standards in all subjects, and make particularly good progress in science, art and design, design technology and geography. Pupils have a good range of speaking and listening skills, behave well and are eager to learn. Taking into account the standards reached by the pupils, the quality of teaching and the curriculum provided, the school gives good value for money.

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

- It reaches above average standards throughout the school in science, art and design, geography and design technology.
- The headteacher provides very good leadership, and is supported by a well-motivated and knowledgeable governing body.
- The teaching is consistently good throughout the school.
- It promotes high standards of behaviour and excellent relationships between all members of the school community.
- It provides a good range of additional activities such as French, Latin and after school clubs.
- The parents and people in the community make a significant contribution to the life of the school.

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

- The assessment arrangements to monitor the pupils' progress in some subjects.
- The consistency and quality of marking by teachers in Years 1 to 6.
- The presentation of the pupils' work that varies in quality between classes and subjects.

*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 June 1997, where behaviour and standards in some subjects were identified as good. The school has improved the attainment of the pupils in some subjects such as art and design and design and technology. It has maintained standards in most others where judgements have been made. The standards of behaviour and relationships have been maintained and the headteacher, appointed since the last inspection, has improved the overall leadership of the school.

## STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1999	2000	2001	2001
English	C	C	E	D
Mathematics	E	D	E	D
Science	C	E	C	B

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

The youngest pupils in the school make secure progress in their learning. In their language development and knowledge and understanding of the world they make good progress. By the time they start the National Curriculum, they reach the expected standards in their early learning goals. There were some variations of attainment between the girls' and boys' writing and reading in last year's test results. The results in the 2001 national tests for eleven-year-olds were well below average in English and mathematics compared to all schools, but average in science. When compared to similar schools, the pupils did well in science, but were just below average in English and mathematics. Inspection evidence indicates that pupils attain standards that are in line with national expectation in mathematics and English, and confirms the higher levels of attainment in science. In the latest tests this year, there are indications that the school has improved upon the results attained by the pupils last year.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. The pupils have very good attitudes to each other and to the staff of the school.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. The pupils move around the school sensibly, play together well on the playground and work sensibly during lessons.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. The school promotes the personal development of the pupils very well, and school council helps the pupils to understand the needs of the community within the school.
Attendance	Good. The pupils arrive punctually for school, and move promptly for lessons.

The pupils work together very well and develop excellent relationships with each other and the staff. This contributes to the good ethos found in the school. The pupils are very attentive, hard working and can be trusted to work independently. The daily routines of work are well established, which enables the pupils to settle down quickly to work.

## 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 is good overall and is a strength of the school. In over three quarters of lessons, the teaching was good or better. Teaching is consistently good in nearly all classes, and no unsatisfactory teaching was seen. Teachers have very good relationships with the pupils and have appropriate expectations. Pupils are managed very well which helps them to learn effectively. There are variations in the way pupils' work is marked, and the presentation of their work varies between classes and subjects. Good teaching helps pupils reach high standards of behaviour and the above expected standards they attain in science, art and design, geography, and design and technology.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. The school successfully provides a broad and balanced curriculum. Although some classes cover more than one age group, the school makes good provision for this throughout the school.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. The arrangements for identifying pupils with special educational needs are good. Pupils are given close support and help individually and within group work.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Satisfactory. The one pupil involved has sound levels of support, and benefits from specialist help
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good overall. The caring ethos is promoted effectively throughout the school, and there are good arrangements to promote pupils' spiritual, moral and cultural development. The school develops the pupils' social skills particularly well.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very good. The school monitors the well being of its pupils very well pastorally, but there are some weaknesses in assessment arrangements in some subjects. The school knows its pupils very well and demonstrate very good levels of care.

The curriculum is broad and balanced and gives pupils a wide experience in the National Curriculum. It is enhanced well with extra-curricular clubs such as chess, young engineers and sports clubs. The imbalance in the planning of the curriculum noted in the last inspection has been addressed well. The curriculum is enhanced with visits to local places of interest. There is very good equality of opportunity provided. The school has a good ethos where visitors feel valued and welcomed. The links with the parents are good, and the majority of them support the school with little reservation. The information provided for them is of appropriate quality and gives information about work covered over the year, but parents do not always receive updates on a regular basis. The parents regularly contribute to the life of the school in terms of helping within school and at special events.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

<b>Aspect</b>	<b>Comment</b>
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good. The headteacher provides very clear and supportive leadership. School improvement planning is good and gives clear priorities for action. The building project has been managed well.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Very good. The governors are very supportive and proactive. Their links with the school are well established, particularly in regard to the subjects of the curriculum and aspects such as finance and special educational needs. They fulfil their 'critical friend' role well.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Effective. The analysis of weaknesses both in the test results and in specific areas of the pupils' work, such as boys' writing is leading to improvement.
The strategic use of resources	Very good. The use of resources is very good overall. The decision to improve the school buildings is appropriate. The school has implemented the principles of 'best value' in its financial and planning activities. The school gives good value for money.

The school is very well led by a committed and caring headteacher. The staff work as a team to tackle the many tasks associated with the running of the school. Developments are well conceived and carried out. The day-to-day finances of the school are managed effectively overall, and the resources of the school are good overall. The playground and playing fields provide a pleasant and useful environment. The current accommodation restricts pupils' learning in activities such as computer work and physical education, but will be resolved when the extension work is completed for Autumn 2002.

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

<b>What pleases parents most</b>	<b>What parents would like to see improved</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The care shown for the pupils.</li> <li>• The behaviour of the pupils.</li> <li>• The range of activities provided such as French.</li> <li>• The ethos of the school.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The information provided for them on occasions.</li> <li>• The expectation of what pupils achieve in some classes.</li> </ul>

The inspection team agrees with the positive views expressed by the parents. The quality of information provided for parents is satisfactory overall with some good features such as the newsletters which are informative. The information about what work pupils are covering is given infrequently, although it is freely available in the school. This could be improved. The inspection findings do not support the view that expectations are not high enough in particular classes. They are appropriate overall.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. When they come to school, the pupils' attainment is broadly in line with the county average except in their language abilities, which are below. By the end of the Foundation Stage, most of the children meet the expectations of the early learning goals that are set for them. The children have very good attitudes to their learning, and they attain well in all areas. Good progress is made in their development of language and literacy skills. Practical tasks are also used well to enable pupils to make particularly good progress in their knowledge and understanding of the world. Visits to the local church combined with investigations using the school's environmental areas develop their curiosity well. The children have a good range of skills in drawing, painting in the style of Monet, and musical activities.
2. At the time of the last inspection, the standards attained by pupils were in line with the national expectation in all subjects, and in geography, history and physical education, higher standards were reached. There have been improvements made since then, particularly in art and design, and design and technology work where pupils attain standards above the national expectation by the time pupils are seven and eleven. In their history work, the standards have been sustained. In physical education for eleven-year-olds, the pupils reach the expected standards nationally, and some reach higher standards.
3. In the national tests last year, the results for seven-year-olds were in the lowest five percent obtained by all schools nationally in reading and writing and were very low in mathematics. This was a drop from their average levels in reading and writing obtained the previous year, although mathematics was still low. However, until last year, the trends in improvement had matched the national picture for seven-year-olds, but in mathematics the trend has been falling since 2000. The boys also fare less well in their writing and reading, falling behind the girls. The school has recognised this and this year has tackled the issue with a focus upon boys' writing and reading. The reverse was true in mathematics, where the boys did slightly better than the girls last year. Comparisons with similar schools appear to indicate a more positive picture, although the results reached were still below average. The school has secure evidence to indicate that these pupils entered the school with significantly lower than average attainment and this group of pupils suffered severe disruption because of staffing difficulties in the year leading up to the tests. The school failed to meet its targets for attainment last year in English and mathematics, but these were high, given this group of pupils had lower than average attainment of entry.
4. The results for pupils last year aged eleven compared very well with those attained nationally in science, but were very low in their English and mathematics. The results obtained in science compared very well to similar schools, but in mathematics and English are just below average. For eleven-year-olds, results in English and science appeared to decline from a high in 2000, although taking the past three years results together, the schools results for English mathematics and science are just below the national average. This group of pupils had higher than average levels of special educational needs and may, in part, explain why they attained less well than those in previous years.

5. The inspection findings indicate a more positive picture of attainment for pupils throughout the school. They reach higher than expected standards in science, art and design, design and technology, and geography. They achieve well in these subjects, and this is an improvement since the last inspection. The pupils throughout the school attain satisfactorily in their speaking and listening, reading, and writing. By the time they are seven the pupils respond confidently to questions, and put forward their ideas well in discussions. This continues as the pupils move through the school, and by the time they are eleven the pupils have appropriate levels of discussion, speaking and listening skills. Many pupils read confidently, and have a wide taste in their reading choice. The pupils develop secure writing skills by the time they are seven, which are built upon successfully as they move through the school. The national literacy strategy has had a significant effect on improving standards attained, along with good teaching evident throughout the school. The school's concentration on improving boys' confidence and skills in their writing is beginning to be evident within the work seen and in their willingness to write more readily.
6. In mathematics, the pupils attain the standards that are expected nationally for pupils aged seven and eleven. The youngest pupils are secure in their number work, counting accurately, adding single and two digit numbers to 10, and working out different ways that numbers can be subtracted from each other. They also have a good knowledge of basic block graphs. The oldest pupils have a suitable knowledge of basic number work, and are confident in handling numbers to four figures. The pupils also divide decimals and percentages with confidence, although their mental agility is slower than might be expected. They can, however, work out problems quickly using written methods.
7. In science, the pupils attain standards above the national expectations throughout the school. By the time they are seven pupils know the simple effects of magnets, the properties of simple circuits and the conditions need for plant growth. By the time they are eleven, pupils have a good knowledge of different materials, major parts of the body and the nature of solids and liquids. Their investigative skills are developed well and pupils are prepared securely for their next stage of education.
8. In the remaining subjects where judgments were made, the standards that pupils attain are in line with the national expectation by the time they are seven and eleven in history, information and communication technology, music, physical education, and religious education. In art and design, the pupils attain well, with good examples seen such as painting, weaving and pottery. In design and technology, the pupils generate good ideas, know different ways to join materials, and the oldest pupils tackle the building of quite advanced structures. In geography, the pupils attain good standards throughout the school. No formal lessons were seen in Years 1 and 2 in information and communication technology. However, informal discussions were held with pupils and activities were seen supporting other lessons. These indicate that they attain expected standards by the time they are seven. By the time they leave the school, the pupils attain standards in line with the national expectation. The pupils use simple word processing, e-mail facilities and CD-ROM programs confidently. In music, the pupils attain expected standards throughout the school. No history was planned during the inspection, but the past work indicates that the pupils attain sound standards throughout the school. In physical education, no lessons were seen in Years 1 and 2, so no judgment about standards is possible for this stage. The planning and discussion with pupils indicates that they cover an appropriate range of activities through the year such as football, netball, outside games, dance and swimming. The standards the pupils' attain by the time they are eleven are in line with the national expectation. They have a secure range of skills such as throwing, catching and hitting.

9. The school has recently been awarded a school achievement grant for its improved standards over the past two years. Overall, the school has improved its standards in subjects and has recognised the need to maintain and improve standards particularly in English and mathematics. There are clear signs that the higher expectations in these subjects are beginning to influence results. For example, the latest test results for seven-year-olds in English appear to have risen from just over 50 percent reaching the expected level last year, to 90 percent of pupils, subject to moderation. In the tests for eleven-year-olds, initial informal evidence suggests that the pattern is of rising attainment.

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

10. The good behaviour seen in the last inspection has been maintained and improved. The pupils' attitudes to learning are very good.
11. The pupils enjoy coming to school and their attendance is above the national average. However, the school is rightly concerned about the effect on pupils' achievement on the increasing amount of absence due to families taking holidays in term time. Unauthorised absence is below the national average.
12. The pupils are enthusiastic learners. They quickly apply themselves to the tasks set by the teacher and concentrate well throughout the lessons. This was particularly commendable during the inspection as there was considerable noise and distractions from the building work immediately outside the classrooms. Pupils do not always aim to produce their best written work and, therefore, the presentation of work is variable.
13. Relationships throughout the school community are excellent. Pupils respect their teachers and this is reciprocated. The caring ethos of the school is evident and pupils help each other. In class discussions, they listen attentively to each other and show respect for different cultures and religions. In an assembly about Mohammed's birthday, pupils were interested and keen to show their knowledge of aspects of the Islamic faith.
14. Pupils' social development is very good. Where pupils have responsibility, for example as school councillors, they carry out their responsibilities conscientiously. They have also been involved in the healthy school initiative by being on committees with governors discussing healthy eating. Opportunity for pupils to develop their independent learning skills is less well planned for in the reception class.
15. Behaviour is good overall and often very good. Pupils behave well in nearly all lessons and the behaviour in the classes is never less than satisfactory. Pupils are very good at ignoring individual pupils who have behavioural problems. There have been two fixed term exclusions in the last year. Pupils work and play well together. For example, in a Year 1 lesson, pupils co-operated very well while making pop-up pictures. During playtimes, pupils play happily with each other and use the play equipment sensibly.

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

16. The teaching is good overall. There are strengths that are apparent throughout the school and quality of teaching was satisfactory in all of the lessons seen. It was at least good or very good in over three-quarters of the lessons. This represents an improvement on what was reported at the previous inspection. This reflects the

emphasis that the staff place upon continuing to improve the teaching in order to raise the pupils' attainment.

17. The teaching of the youngest children in the reception class is generally good. They are well supported by a classroom assistant and volunteers who work under the close guidance of the class teacher. The planning of the work for this age group is based on recently published national guidance, and caters well for the range of ages and abilities in the class. The youngest pupils are provided with a good range of activities that work in well with the other activities for the older pupils. The opportunities for them to choose their own activities to follow is less well planned for. Despite the disruption of the building work, the physical requirements of the curriculum are well met. The teaching of the aspect dealing with pupils' knowledge and understanding of the world is particularly good. The pupils are taken to local places of interest where they are given opportunities to explore and carry out simple investigations. This improves the learning for these pupils and is successful in developing their knowledge and experiences.
18. Throughout the school the teachers generally plan their lessons thoroughly and set out clearly what they want the pupils to learn. Nearly all lessons have a clear focus that is shared with the pupils, written on the board to remind them, and sometime written in their books. In Year 1, for example, the teaching gives very clear reasons why the lesson is important. The skills the pupils learn and practise are covered well, along with a quick recap of the previous week's lesson. In a Year 2, science lesson, the teaching highlighted the topic well by reviewing what the pupils had learnt before, followed by sharing the aims of the lesson about to take place.
19. The teachers plan a variety of activities that make full allowance for the range of ages and abilities that are in the class, due to the mixed ages of pupils. This is carried out by arranging well-organised group work, pitched at appropriate levels. For example, the work in Years 4 and 5 is planned for several different levels with the aim of producing some 'polished' writing. Some pupils have their own sheets to help them, while others have just one between the group to encourage their collaborative working. In another lesson, in the same class, the teaching assistant was deployed well to support a lower attaining group of pupils. Overall, the teachers' expectations of the quality of the pupils' contributions to the lesson is good, although not all emphasise the importance of presentation in the pupils' writing and recording. For example, the handwriting varies in quality and some pupils put dates on their work while others do not. In the best lessons, the expectations are high, particularly in the demands placed upon behaviour, good manners, and collaborative working.
20. The literacy and numeracy strategies are being implemented effectively through the school and some aspects have been modified. For example, providing additional reading and writing time during the week is bringing about improvements in both areas. Good teaching was seen throughout the school. The good features such as having a clear focus for the lesson, well established group work and good levels of teacher knowledge are particularly strong in most classes. For example, the introductory parts of lessons are short, to the point and move on quickly to the main focus and activity. For example, in Year 2 and 3 class, despite the high levels of noise from the building works, the teacher's use of small white boards enabled the pupils to record then add their numbers, despite distractions. In their English and mathematics work, the pupils in Years 1 to 6 have targets which are kept in the front of their books and which are monitored regularly by the class teachers.
21. The excellent relationships that the staff have with the pupils certainly helps to motivate them. This is a strong feature of the lessons and in the general ethos that is promoted

around the school by all staff. This enables good learning to take place in many lessons and within different subjects. For example in a Years 5 and 6 physical education lesson on the school field, good relationships and expectation of good behaviour enabled the lesson to proceed well, with the pupils engaged in a variety of activities with little fuss. The good learning is a feature of the vast majority of the lessons, and the behaviour and quality of relationships promoted are significant strengths of the school.

22. The teachers keep good levels of assessment information in English, mathematics and science. The level, range and quality of information in the remaining subjects varies and does not provide a consistent picture of pupils' progress. It relies too heavily upon informal recording and knowledge of the pupils' abilities. The amount of record keeping and assessment information is good in the reception class, and gives a clear picture of the pupils' abilities in different areas of the Foundation Stage curriculum. The quality of marking is generally consistent, but the comments indicating how pupils can improve further are relatively few, and vary between different classes. Some good practice is evident in Years 2 and 3, where written comments in books are frequent. In other classes this is not sufficiently evident. Comments made to the pupils as they work are generally very helpful and supportive.
23. The teaching of the pupils with special educational needs is good overall. The activities take good account of the learning targets set in their individual education plans. The teaching assistants help the pupils to raise their attainment especially in literacy and numeracy, and also support effectively within nearly all subjects. In other areas, the close support is improving the way pupils approach their work and the way they integrate in the school.
24. The arrangements for supporting reading at home significantly enhance the teaching and learning that takes place in the classroom, and the arrangements for homework are usually clear and consistent between classes. The promotion of extra-curricular clubs and activities such as the additional work in subjects like French and Latin is a positive feature enjoyed by the pupils. The school also runs 'booster' classes for English and mathematics that are well attended by pupils and are leading to higher standards of attainment.

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

25. The last inspection identified that the school provided a broad and balanced curriculum that fully met the statutory requirements of the National Curriculum and the County Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education. Evidence from this inspection indicates a similar picture. The school has reviewed its balance of time and rigour of subject coverage to allow more time to be given to the teaching of basic English and mathematical skills. The curriculum now takes account of both the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and teaching has been adapted in line with these recommendations to teach the basic skills.
26. There is a good range of curricular opportunities for all pupils that is enriched with the provision of French and Latin. The Foundation Stage curriculum for the under fives is a broad and stimulating curriculum with a wide range of learning opportunities through the effective use of the school and the local environment. Cross-curricular planning allows coverage of many aspects of the curriculum that enriches the learning for the pupils. Curriculum policy statements are in place for each subject. These are supported by schemes of work on two yearly cycles. This ensures that the curriculum is broad,

balanced and builds on previous learning, and one to which all pupils have equality of access. The curriculum is well resourced with mature environmental areas, an adventure trail and a swimming pool. The curriculum is further enriched by the provision of focused subject weeks such as in art and science when artists and scientists visit the school to work alongside the children. School visits are planned to enhance learning and pupils make good use of them in their learning. For example, Year 1 visited Hastings and made paintings and collages from their observations.

27. Planning is thorough but sometimes lacks the provision for teachers to record on-going assessment. This means that there are inconsistencies in teachers' use of assessment to inform planning. End of year assessments of English, mathematics and science are good although the school has still to make full use of the non-statutory tests it uses to assess pupils' achievements. Their progress is measured at least termly in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science, but as yet the school has not formalised a way of recording pupils' progress in the remaining subjects. The school monitors pupils' individual performance and sets pupil targets in both English and mathematics. Teachers have still to make full use of assessment to assess how far a pupil needs to progress each year and to monitor their progress.
28. The curriculum opportunities for pupils with special educational needs are good and they make good progress. Individual education records are updated on a regular basis. The use of booster classes in English and mathematics for the oldest pupils, and early intervention for the youngest pupils in Years 1 and 2 are used effectively. The learning for both the less and more able pupils are planned for effectively. Use of teaching assistants is good and pupils with special educational needs are well supported ensuring that the school is very socially and educationally inclusive. This ensures equality of opportunity for all pupils.
29. The school provides a very good range of extra-curricular activities helping to support the wider personal development of the pupils and enhance the curriculum. These activities include a club for infants and homework as well as sport, music, art, chess, engineering and environmental activities. Parents are kept well informed about extra-curricular opportunities with a booklet outlining the programme for each term. The school organises a residential visit that provides opportunities to study areas of information technology and outdoor adventurous activities that cannot be provided on the school site.
30. The school has developed good links with other schools and with other outside agencies. The Foundation Stage co-ordinator visits local playgroups and they in turn visit the school. Writing and art projects have been developed with local primary schools to share good practice. Year 6 pupils visit local secondary schools which also support the school. The planned arts week will use the musical expertise of two local secondary schools. This is very much a community school with local people helping with reading and the engineering and chess club. The Friends' Association is strong and raises funds for the school.
31. The provision for the pupils' personal, social and health education is good which reinforces the findings of the last report. The school's policy is comprehensive and covers sex education and drug misuse. Personal, social and health education is planned into the broader curriculum. Discussion times are undertaken and the children can talk about what happens. For example, during one lesson observed, the children were able to discuss and evaluate their likes and dislikes.

32. Overall, the opportunities the school provides for developing pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are good. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is good. Assemblies provide telling opportunities for pupils to reflect on other people's values and beliefs and on one occasion observed, the pupils talked about the need to wash hands before touching the Koran and showed great respect for other's beliefs. Collective worship is planned on a two-year cycle to ensure a wide coverage of spiritual and religious topics. Opportunities to develop pupils' spiritual awareness through displays and through appreciating the natural beauty of the world through art and science are in evidence throughout the school.
33. The provision for pupils' moral development is good and their social development is very good. The excellent relationships seen during the inspection are a reflection of the high moral and social values set by all staff. There is a strong sense of ethos, respect and responsibility encouraged by the playground helpers, prefects and monitors. Pupils sit on a committee alongside adults to discuss the healthy school projects. School rules are displayed in classrooms, pupils know what is expected of them and clearly understand right from wrong. The School Council with representatives from each class provides pupils with the opportunity to develop personal responsibility and play an active part in school life such as when they helped to make decisions about decorating the toilets.
34. The school makes good provision for the development of pupils' cultural awareness. Religious education and assemblies effectively develop pupils' understanding of their own culture and major world faiths. The teaching of French and Latin widen the pupils' knowledge of the European community. The school benefited from a long-term residential visit from a Japanese intern. The pupils experienced a Japanese tea ceremony and lunch. Other cultural links are developed through the use of world music and art from other cultures as seen in displays of artefacts from Ancient Greece and India. Later this term a gamelan is arriving in school. Overall the school makes satisfactory provision in preparing their pupils for the diverse range of cultures found in society.

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

35. The school provides very good pastoral care. The teachers know their pupils very well. Although there are no formal procedures for assessing pupils' personal development the excellent relationships between the staff and pupils is fundamental to the good personal support for pupils.
36. Attendance is very closely monitored and the school endeavours to contact the parents of all pupils who are absent without authorisation before 9.30am on the first day of absence. The school is working very hard to convince parents that it is not in their children's best interest to take holidays in term time. As a comparatively small school, any incidents of poor behaviour tend to be caught early and dealt with before they can develop. However, the school is not complacent in this area and takes any allegations of bullying very seriously. Parents and pupils are very confident that the school deals with any such incidents effectively and feel the school is a happy and safe environment.
37. The school has very good policies and procedures for ensuring the health and safety of the pupils. Governors regularly visit the site to check for any hazards as well as reviewing the health and safety policy. There are three staff that are fully qualified as first aiders and all staff have had at least one day of training. Child protection

procedures are securely in place and the headteacher is the designated teacher for child protection. All staff have had recent training in this area.

38. In the Foundation stage, a good level of information is kept about the pupils' attainment on entry to the school and how they progress into their next classes. In Years 2 to 6, the teachers maintain good levels of assessment information in English, mathematics and science. The range, quality and quantity of information in the remaining subjects varies and does not provide a consistent picture of pupils' progress. The quality of marking is generally consistent, but the comments indicating how pupils can improve further are relatively few, and vary between different classes. There is some good practice where written comments in books are frequent, but these are not sufficiently evident. Verbal comments made to the pupils as they work are generally very helpful and supportive.

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

39. The school continues to have a good partnership with parents. It values parents' views and the contribution to both the life of the school and involvement in their children's education.
40. The parents are generally pleased with what the school provides. In particular, they value the very good pastoral care, the strong community ethos of the school, that pupils behave well and the wide range of activities available to the pupils. Areas that parents would like to see improved are the quality of information, in particular about pupils' progress and the curriculum. In addition, some parents feel that the expectations of what pupils can achieve in some classes is not high enough. The inspection team supports the parents' positive views. The information about pupils' progress and what they are studying is updated regularly, but by having the information on classroom doors limits its value. Expectations of pupils by teachers are appropriate throughout the school, and indeed are rising due the examination of test results and how particular groups of pupils attain.
41. The school works hard at involving parents in all aspects of school life and is very successful. The parents' evenings are held at the beginning of the school year and teachers give information about what the pupils will be studying over the year at these meetings. Teachers display further information about topics on the class notice boards throughout the year. However, there are no procedures for ensuring that parents who do not regularly come into school receive this information. The annual reports to parents are satisfactory, giving parents a clear view of what their children can do and understand in all subjects. The reports do not identify whether the pupil is working at the level expected for their age. There are useful targets for the pupil to enable them to improve their work. In addition to the reports and formal parents' meetings, teachers are always happy for parents to discuss any concerns they may have. The parents acknowledge this and have great confidence that the teachers will deal with any problems, both academic and social, their children may have.
42. The school regularly seeks parents' views through questionnaires and incorporates suggestions in the school development plan. Parents support the school in a number of ways. They, with other members of the local community, become pupils' book buddies, they help in the library, give support in the classroom and help on school visits. The Friends of Icklesham School are very active and work hard to improve the resources of the school. They have recently provided a pergola and a computer.

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

43. The leadership and management of the school are very good. The headteacher provides the strong leadership that has ensured the ongoing improvement of the school. The staff and governors share the headteacher's very positive commitment to the development of the school and in the raising of standards. There is a clear sense of direction and purpose.
44. The school's aims and values are published and widely distributed. The behaviour and high quality of relationships at all levels in the school demonstrate the commitment of pupils and adults to live up to them. A significant feature of the aims is an explicit commitment to the development of the individual child through a broad and balanced education based on Christian principles.
45. The headteacher, deputy headteacher and the key subject co-ordinators monitor the quality of teaching in classrooms. This is usually by observation or by evaluation of the work of pupils. Outside advice is also brought in to validate the quality of work in the classrooms. Monitoring is a significant development since the last inspection. The school evaluates the performance data produced by national tests, although the use of more ongoing assessment is less well developed. The result of analysing national test results has ensured that more realistic performance targets are set. Early indications are that the test results this year are higher in response to the school's actions to remedy the shortcomings. The school has responded well in compensating for the dip in results that the school had in some subjects last year.
46. The day-to-day management of the school is good. All staff have current job descriptions that establish their roles and the expectations of them. An effective deputy, who has clearly defined areas of responsibility, supports the headteacher. There is very good delegation of responsibility to the subject co-ordinators, enabling them to manage and develop their own areas of operation. They are beginning to develop the monitoring of the pupils' standards in their subjects. The programme of performance management for teaching and non-teaching staff is in place and effectively organised. Their targets are regularly reviewed and agreed. Training needs are identified with regard to both the individual and the school's needs.
47. The governing body is very effective. The governors play an active part in the school life and provide strong and highly committed support. The committee structure is logical and well organised with clear terms of reference. The governors have a clear vision for the development of the school and make an appropriate contribution to the construction of the school's development plan and priorities. They receive very good quality information about the school's performance and have a realistic appreciation of the school's current strengths and weaknesses. They fulfil their statutory duties. Educational priorities are established by staff and governors in the development plan and very well supported by the prudent use of funds. There is a well-established process for constructing the development plan and a variety of strategies are used to identify priorities for future years.
48. The school is well staffed and there is a good match of qualifications and experience to provide a good curriculum. Very good induction processes are in place to support teachers and teaching assistants who are new to the school. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is well managed by a knowledgeable co-ordinator in partnership with the teachers and teaching assistants. Teaching assistants and mid-day supervisors are effectively trained and deployed. They play an important part in ensuring the quality of learning and good behaviour. A considerable strength of the supervisors is their ability to help pupils to structure their play activities.

49. The accommodation has strong features such as the playing fields, nature area and playground, but internally the accommodation is unsatisfactory. The current accommodation is very cramped in some of the teaching spaces and the use of part of the hall as a classroom constrains the indoor physical activities programme and limits its use for activities outside the classroom. The building programme, which began the day before the inspection started, will remedy the deficiencies. The outdoor play areas are good, although the building programme and its attendant safety issues will restrict access for the remainder of the term. The resources for teaching are good and readily accessible. They are particularly good in the provision of a library, and the quality of reading books in general. The provision of artefacts enhances religious education and cultural provision well. The quality of the learning environment and the school surroundings owe much to the standards achieved by the premises manager and to the care and pride in their school shown by the pupils and adults.
50. The financial management of the school is good. The finance committee of governors is provided with good quality information through analysis of the monitoring statements provided by the local authority, suitably annotated by the bursar. New technology such as computers are used well to track and monitor the budget and for other administrative purposes. When it is necessary, the school takes firm action to avoid overspending. The governors have a policy of achieving best value in their transactions and the procedures to evaluate and confirm the impact of spending decisions on the pupils' attainment and quality of education is developed appropriately.
51. The school has been very successful in attracting additional funding and specific grants, such as the New Opportunities Fund and the National Grid for Learning. It was recently granted a national achievement award for progress in raising attainment. Additional funds and grants are applied appropriately to their designated purposes and often supplemented from the school's budget. The members of the administrative staff are effective, enabling the day-to-day procedures of the school to operate smoothly and allowing the headteacher and staff to focus upon teaching and learning. The school gives good value for money.

## **WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?**

52. In order to continue to raise standards of the pupils' attainment and the quality of education, the staff and governors should address the following issues:
- (1) Improve the quality and consistency of assessment by:
    - a) Ensuring that there is consistent collection and use of assessment information;
    - b) Making better use of information from ongoing testing;
    - c) Using assessment information to guide future planning more consistently. (Paragraphs 110, 114, 123 and 126.)
  - (2) Improve the quality and use of day-to-day marking by:
    - a) Ensuring that work is marked consistently between classes;
    - b) Ensuring that comments by teachers help to point out weaknesses and areas to improve. (Paragraphs 109, 113 and 114.)
  - (3) Improve the presentation of pupils' work by:
    - a) Agreeing common expectations for the presentation of work;

- b) Monitoring the quality of presentation more closely;
- c) Raising the expectation of the pupils in presenting their work well.  
(Paragraphs 75 and 19.)

In addition, the following issue should be addressed;

- Planning to extend child initiated activities in the reception class (paragraph 56).

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	35
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	20

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	6	21	8	0	0	0
Percentage	0	17	60	23	0	0	0

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

### 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)	118
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	25

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	6
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	33

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	1

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	17
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	15

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.2

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0

National comparative data	5.6
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National comparative data	0.5
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*Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.*

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 (Year 2)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	10	6	16

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Total	8	9	14
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	50 (80)	56 (87)	88 (80)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Total	7	14	9
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	44 (87)	88 (73)	56 (87)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 (Year 6)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	8	9	17

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Total	9	9	17
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	53 (100)	53 (86)	100 (100)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Total	10	11	16
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	59 (29)	65 (71)	94 (86)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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

Where the number of girls or boys is 10 or fewer, these details are omitted from the tables.

### **Ethnic background of pupils**

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	1
White	114
Any other minority ethnic group	3

*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)	5.6
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22
Average class size	23.6

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

Total number of education support staff	11
Total aggregate hours worked per week	143

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### **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	1	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	2001
	£
Total income	326,818
Total expenditure	328,200
Expenditure per pupil	3,155
Balance brought forward from previous year	10,785
Balance carried forward to next year	9,403

### **Recruitment of teachers**

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	1
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	2.8
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0.4
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	118
Number of questionnaires returned	27

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	74	26	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	56	37	7	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	37	63	0	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	44	37	19	0	0
The teaching is good.	59	26	15	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	56	22	19	4	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	77	19	4	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	78	19	3	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	59	23	7	4	7
The school is well led and managed.	74	7	15	0	4
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	56	33	11	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	59	41	0	0	0

### Summary of parents' and carers' responses

Parents are generally pleased with what the school provides. In particular, they value the very good pastoral care, the strong community ethos of the school, that pupils behave well and the wide range of activities available to the pupils. Issues raised by parents include the quality of information that they receive on an ongoing basis, in particular, the pupils' progress and the curriculum topics being covered. In addition, some parents felt that the expectations of what pupils can achieve in some classes was not high enough. The inspection team supports the parents' positive views. The information about pupils' progress and what they are studying is satisfactory, but by displaying some of it outside classrooms limits its value. The expectations of pupils by teachers are appropriate.

## **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**

53. The quality of provision is good. This is despite the fact that the children were not able to access their early years play area due to the building work. The school has maintained standards since the last inspection. The curriculum is broad, balanced and planned well, providing a good range of suitable activities for young children.
54. All children are admitted to the reception class in September. They attend part-time until the term in which they are five. Assessments of the children's skills when they enter the school are used to plan future work. On entry to school these assessments are generally in line with the county average although children's language skills are generally poorer. Children make satisfactory progress overall with good progress in communication, language and literacy so that achievement is in line with national expectations by the end of the summer term. Most children are working to achieve the higher stages of the Early Learning Goals and a few are beginning to work on the early stages of the National Curriculum.
55. Teaching and learning is good overall. Planning and assessment are of high quality. They take account of the needs of all children and the good use of support staff ensures that children with special educational needs make good progress. The planning for pupils to choose more activities for themselves is less well developed. Assessment informs future planning and individual pupil targets are set and monitored. Targets are displayed in the classroom to help give the children ownership of their learning. Links between parents and staff are good with teachers readily accessible to parents at the end of the day. Local feeder playgroups are visited by staff and also bring their children to visit the school.

### **Personal, social and emotional development**

56. The teaching of personal, social and emotional development is good. The children are very well cared for by suitably qualified and experienced staff. They are happy, secure and learn in a calm and purposeful atmosphere. They are eager to tackle work and co-operate with each other. The children have very good attitudes to their learning and behave very well. The children are confident, take turns and help each other. In an activity taking place outdoors the children helped each other onto number squares arranged on the field when the teacher told them to stand on the squares. They work effectively in pairs in physical education throwing, rolling and bouncing a big ball to each other. The children attend to matters of personal hygiene and change quite independently for physical education leaving their clothes in neat piles. They take it in turns to take the register and are happy to run errands around the school. The planning of child-initiated activities on a daily basis is not as effectively developed to encourage children to become more independent at decision making. This will build on the already good practice when adults record assessments of children's skills during independent activities during a planned session at the end of each week.

## **Communication, language and literacy**

57. Teaching seen during the inspection was good and designed to give the children experience of the beginnings of the National Literacy Strategy. The children's literacy skills tend to be lower than average on entry and good teaching enables them to reach good standards. In one literacy lesson, the teacher demonstrated some sentences after identifying them with the children in a big book. Most children identify capital letters and full stops. This direct teaching was reinforced by the children copying and writing sentences. They were not, however, encouraged to write independently. The children are given a range of experiences to promote writing skills from tracing and making letters in dough. They form recognisable letters some of which are correctly formed. In a different lesson higher attaining children were able to write words for themselves and best practice was seen when they were allowed to write more independently. The children's Bean Diaries are a good example of this.
58. The children are beginning to read words for themselves and this is monitored through the use of collections of words they are expected to learn. Children were confident to read what they had written in a plenary session observed. Daily regular quiet reading is planned and it was evident that they enjoy books as when some spent time looking at books about the story of Noah.
59. Planning ensures that children have opportunities for the development of spoken language. The class teacher uses good questioning techniques. The children are given opportunities to express their opinions and ask their own questions. Role-play is developed through the use of 'The Icklesham Garden Centre' that has been set up in the classroom. The quality of its use was enhanced by the teacher role-modeling speech and play activities that might take place. Children demonstrate good listening skills and concentrate for good periods of time on a variety of activities.

## **Mathematical development**

60. The majority of children reach the expected standard in mathematical development and some exceed it. Most children identify pictures showing more or less objects in a set and some pupils can predict 1 and 2 more or less than a given number before using the calculator toy to confirm their prediction. The more able count to 20 and add and subtract to 10 using picture clues. The children cover a range of mathematical areas such as number, data handling, measurement, shape and space. They particularly enjoyed measuring out the ingredients for making cheese straws. Good planning ensures that mathematical links are made to other areas of the curriculum. For example, recognising numbers during registration and during physical education.
61. The teaching of mathematics is good and has a positive impact on the progress made by the children. Good use is made of resources. Classroom display reinforces the application of number with number lines, squares and the use of mathematical language. During one lesson observed children enjoyed measuring their beans they had grown using cubes as a measure of height. They are well prepared for the more formal numeracy strategy by the use of a mental and oral introduction to the lesson. They counted in ones and tens using their fingers and hands during this session.

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

62. Very good opportunities are provided to develop the children's knowledge and understanding of the world and the majority reach the expected standards. Good teaching provides a wide range of activities for the children to explore the world around them. They visit the local church and use the school environment widely such as when they used the nature trail to observe mini beasts. They used their sense of sight, smell, touch and hearing to sensibly investigate the small creatures they find. Opportunity to explore and weigh materials is provided and the children made and cooked cheese straws. They also grow beans and cress and can explain that cress needs light to grow properly.
63. Children respond well to learning about people's beliefs and reflecting on life. This was demonstrated when they learned about Noah's Ark. They asked sensible questions and learnt more about different sorts of animals in the world through the range of activities set up in the classroom. They enacted the animals going into the ark and designed their own arks by cutting and pasting animal pictures. The children respond with interest and enthusiasm to these activities.

### **Physical development**

64. During the inspection opportunities for physical development were limited as the children could not use their outdoor area while the building work was taking place. The teacher's planning, however, demonstrates that the pupils usually use this area on a regular basis and have access to climbing and building apparatus and bicycles. Overall the teaching was secure in providing enough activities for pupils, despite the building work.
65. An outdoor physical education lesson provided opportunities for the children to use a range of apparatus such as balls, hoops, bean bags and skipping ropes. The children throw, catch and roll a large ball. Some are able to bounce the ball gently for their partner to catch. They enjoy the running, jumping and class games and demonstrate their good awareness of space. Fine manipulation skills are developed through the use of threading beads, cutting, sticking, painting, mixing, squeezing and moulding play dough, drawing, tracing and writing. The children enjoyed making rubbings on their visit to the local church. The teaching skilfully develops the children's abilities in the activities seen and they reach the expected levels outlined in their early learning goals.

### **Creative development**

66. The teaching is good overall, and the children have a suitable a range of opportunities to develop their creative skills. They achieve the expected standard. Children use a range of artistic materials sensibly including pencils, crayons, scissors, paint and glue. There are some excellent examples of paintings on display. The children are provided with the opportunity of painting in the style of Monet using a variety of techniques and designed their own frame for their picture.
67. Children learn new songs enthusiastically and remember words to a range of songs. They were taught very effectively, and the children sing high, middle and low pitch notes and some were able to sing an 'ostinato' pattern. The children approach the whole experience with enthusiasm and great concentration. They used instruments to keep in time with the beat and followed the picture symbols used by the teacher to sing a range of notes.

## **ENGLISH**

68. The pupils, throughout the school, reach standards in their work that are in line with those expected nationally. Results in the national tests for eleven-year-olds indicated that standards were very low compared with the national average, and low when compared to the standards pupils attain in similar schools. Inspection evidence indicates a more positive picture. The inspection findings are broadly similar to those found at the last inspection.
69. The pupils develop appropriate skills in their speaking and listening, reading, and writing throughout the school. This is a similar picture to the last inspection. The school had sustained the improvement in its test results until last year where they dipped significantly. The school did not reach its demanding target set last year but standards in the school are gradually improving. There are very strong indications from this year's testing that the results are much more positive. For example, over 90 percent of pupils in Year 2 appear to have reached the expected level compared to 53 percent last year.
70. When pupils enter the school, literacy and language skills are below those expected. Their confidence and skills are developed well in the Foundation Stage, and by the time they are seven and eleven they reach the expected standards. In lessons and in assemblies the pupils listen well. They wait attentively and rarely interrupt each other. During an assembly focusing upon different beliefs and religions, the pupils listened very well, aided by the impressive way the assembly was led by a member of staff. The pupils in Years 1 and 2 listen well during lessons, despite the disruption of Year 1 being taught in the hall and the Year 2 and 3 class being near to the building works taking place. Despite some high noise levels, the pupils maintained close attention to the teacher. This is evident in different lessons, not only in their English work. For example, the pupils listened well during a music lesson, where good teaching motivated the pupils to listen carefully to the rhythms and songs the teacher was singing.
71. In their English activities they pay close attention and speak with confidence. For example in Year 2, the pupils confidently read out their 'Bug' poems to the whole class. Informally the pupils speak with confidence, and willingly discuss their work with visitors and explain clearly what they are doing. By the time they are eleven the pupils consolidate their listening skills and are confident speakers. Within lessons they readily explain their point of view to the whole class and each other. For example, in Year 5 and 6, the pupils readily share their thoughts to explain why pupils truant. In informal discussions the pupils speak with confidence on different issues and readily explain the work they are completing. The teaching is generally good at encouraging pupils to talk, and suitable opportunities are provided for them to speak to larger audiences such as assemblies and in performances to parents.
72. The pupils reach the expected standards in their reading by the time they are seven and eleven. In Years 1 and 2, the pupils have a suitable range of strategies for reading such as sounding out letters and the beginnings of words. The pupils have secure skills in recognising simple and more complex words, using the pictures and context of the text to help them. The higher attaining pupils are particularly confident in their reading, and they name their favourite stories such as 'George's Marvellous Medicine' by Roald Dahl. They read frequently both to the class teachers and to the many helpers who come into the school during the week. Their reading records are kept up to date, and have comments to help judge progress. During lessons, the pupils' reading skills are extended well, and the skills of recognising 'ed' and 'ing' at the ends of words are taught well. By the time they are eleven, the pupils read confidently both within lessons and from their own reading books. For example, Year 6 pupils read with expression and confidence. They read widely; for example books such as 'Goodnight

Mr Tom' as well as the 'Harry Potter' stories. Their reading is enhanced by 'book buddies' who come into the school to support their reading. Year 6 pupils also spend time reading with the youngest children in the school to support them in their reading. The oldest pupils have a clear understanding of fiction and non-fiction texts, which is promoted well by good teaching. In Years 5 and 6 for example, enthusiastic teaching and activities about Norse Gods motivate and teaches the pupils fun ways of interpreting quite demanding texts.

73. The pupils' standard of writing is generally satisfactory throughout, although there are some variations in the quality of handwriting and presentation between different year groups. The youngest pupils in Year 1 develop their grasp of writing appropriately, with some examples of extended sentences. Others develop their knowledge of words that contain letter patterns such 'oo' and 'ou' and recognise them in text. By the time pupils are seven, they write at some length, and in different ways. For example, the pupils in Year 2 wrote some effective alternatives to a 'Bug' poem read by the teacher as an example. Many show a good understanding of the rhythm and rhyme needed to write their own versions. Their past work indicates that the pupils write for different purposes, such as lists, descriptions of kittens and a visit to a zoo park. The pupils' spelling is developed systematically by some effective teaching, which often highlights different spelling patterns and word endings. In their work the pupils' spelling is consistent and misspelt words are usually phonetically correct. They use full stops and capital letters accurately, although their handwriting is sometimes inconsistent. It is usually joined, but not consistently placed on the line. The pupils' learning is satisfactory overall as they complete their work with enthusiasm, showing little reluctance to 'have a go' in their draft writing books provided for this purpose.
74. By the time the pupils are eleven, they reach satisfactory standards in their writing. Their comprehension of text is good and they write their answers to questions using a good range of vocabulary. Their spelling is usually accurate and the pupils have sound skills in spelling difficult words using a dictionary and thesaurus. They cover an appropriate range of styles such as biographies in Years 4 and 5 and poems in Year 6. These show a secure understanding of the different conventions, and as the work progresses, the length and quality of writing improves. For example, work in the writing journals of Year 5 pupils has interesting personal observations, jokes, and observations about what teachers fear most! Within lessons, writing is also the focus of sustained study. For example, in Years 4 and 5, the pupils work effectively at how to produce some 'polished' text and exploring the use of similes and metaphors to enrich their work. Very good teaching extended their skills effectively and developed the pupils' awareness of poetic form well. The oldest pupils in the school learn effectively and have a good awareness of the need to draft their work. Their independent writing is appropriately structured. The early indications from this year's national test results are that higher standards will be reached and the inspection evidence supports this.
75. The pupils' use of their English skills is evident across different areas of the curriculum, although the work is not always well presented. In their geography, science and history work, the pupils' literacy and writing skills develop securely. For example in science, the oldest pupils regularly record their work and know how to write it in a structured way. In geography the pupils write descriptions about everyday life in an Indian village.
76. Teaching is satisfactory overall. Some very good teaching was seen in the class of Year 4 and 5 pupils. The teachers have a good understanding of the National Literacy Strategy and are modifying it now to the specific needs of the school. For example, the teachers have introduced more flexible arrangements for guided reading and supplement reading with initiatives such as the 'book buddy' and paired reading

arrangements. The marking of the pupils' work is largely supportive, but varies between classes. All teachers manage their pupils well, and this enables good learning to take place in nearly all lessons. The teachers' subject knowledge is well developed and they are taking into account the lessons learned from the results obtained in national tests. For example, a focus on boys' writing has been highlighted both with school improvement planning and in shorter-term plans.

77. The pupils with special educational needs make good progress within all lessons. Appropriately planned work at their level, along with the grouping arrangements within classes, helps the pupils to work to their abilities. The teaching assistants provide sensitive and timely support to all pupils, and are particularly supportive to those pupils with special educational needs.
78. The subject is co-ordinated well. Areas of weakness have been identified from the last report and from last year's test results. The oldest pupils in the school now read more demanding texts and increasing the range of writing has been a focus, particularly for the boys. The school has identified the need for more male role models for writing for example. In addition a 'spelling plan' has raised the profile of spelling, and in Year 2, the lower attaining pupils are given some additional guidance to improve their skills and confidence. A range of additional activities have been arranged such as an arts week, poetry week, a visiting drama workshop called 'Shakespeare for kids', and book fairs held during the year. The level and quality of resources are good, and the pupils benefit from having a well stocked library for non-fiction books and general resources for reading.

## **MATHEMATICS**

79. The pupils' attainment in national tests for seven and eleven-year-olds when measured by the end of key stage assessments is below expectations compared to all schools nationally and those in similar circumstances. Overall standards of work seen during the inspection were satisfactory for both age groups. This represents a similar picture to previous inspection. The pupils' progress and learning are satisfactory with pupils with special educational needs making good progress. The school did not reach its demanding target set last year but standards in mathematics in the school are gradually improving. This is confirmed by early evidence from this year's tests for seven-year-olds. There is no significant difference between the attainment of girls and boys. Pupils' attitudes to mathematics and behaviour are good throughout the school
80. By the time the pupils are seven, they are achieving in line with national expectation. They experience a broad range of mathematical skills, although those based on investigations were not observed during the inspection. The pupils mentally recall addition and subtraction facts to 10, know place value to one hundred and use their 2 and 10 times tables. Their mental agility is good. During one lesson they demonstrated that they could draw block graphs accurately using appropriate scales. In a Year 1 lesson, the pupils demonstrated that they could order the days of the week and some could tell the time to half past the hour. Presentation of the work is variable with the date or the learning objective of the lesson infrequently recorded.
81. The overall quality of teaching in Years 1 and 2 during the small number of lessons observed was satisfactory overall. There was no unsatisfactory teaching observed. Where teaching was good pupils were involved in their learning using small white boards or individual clocks to tell the time. The teacher in one lesson effectively modelled how to draw a graph using an overhead projector. Where teaching was comparatively weaker, the teaching does not make the best use of conclusions to

lessons due to lack of time and the learning objective not confirmed or reviewed with the pupils.

82. By the time the pupils are eleven, they achieve standards that are in line with national expectation. They use probability effectively, half and double hundreds and thousands and apply this to decimals and work on money. The pupils use information and technology skills to calculate angles through the use of a programmable robot and a 'super logo' computer programme. Higher attaining pupils can divide using decimals and can use percentages. Other pupils, however, have difficulty with mental calculations and do not readily apply their times tables or divide small numbers using remainders. Their mental agility with number is slower than would be expected, although work observed during the inspection demonstrated that pupils could calculate well in written format. The presentation of work varies across different classes. Not all work is dated or titled reflecting the learning objective of the lesson.
83. The overall quality of teaching in Years 3 to 6 is good overall. Where teaching is very good the teacher demonstrated strategies of halving and doubling to the pupils and pupils were expected to explain their strategies to their peers. The pupils are enthusiastic in lessons where games are used effectively to further their learning. They enjoyed using dice to work out probability and to record numbers to double and halve. All teaching is based on the National Numeracy Strategy and mathematical activities take place daily. A commercial scheme effectively supports this teaching but investigative work is not covered as thoroughly. Homework regularly supports class teaching and parents are informed of the types of activities they can use with their children to further develop their mathematical skills. For the oldest pupils this homework involves problem solving but is not structured throughout the school to the teaching of investigations.
84. The leadership and management of the subject are good. The co-ordinator has a clear picture of how the school compares nationally and strategies have been put in place to address identified issues. The co-ordinator monitors work, planning and lessons and addresses issues that arise. Teachers have received training in the knowledge and teaching of mathematics and support from the county's subject consultant. A range of strategies to boost pupils' knowledge and skills in Years 3 to 6 are in place and pupils attend extra teaching sessions both within curriculum time and after school. The pupils demonstrate their enthusiasm for the subject by conscientiously attending after school provision on a regular basis. Resources are good, used effectively and stored and labelled consistently well. Displays inform pupils and celebrate their work effectively. The school is well placed to improve standards further.
85. Planning is effective in that it reinforces the National Numeracy Strategy. Teachers plan for all ability groups ensuring good support for pupils with additional needs and higher attaining pupils. Teaching assistants effectively support lower attaining pupils and they make good progress. Cross-curricular links are planned, for example, by the display using information technology to teach angles. Planning, however, does not consistently allow for teachers to record daily assessments, later used to inform future teaching. Where there are opportunities to do so, they are generally used well and future planning is, therefore, more effective. Pupils' progress against the key learning skills is regularly monitored and recorded termly. The school analyses its non-statutory standardised tests in Years 3, 4 and 5, although this is not yet fully developed. Marking is undertaken regularly throughout the school but is inconsistent. Where it is good, it informs the pupils what they have done well and how they can improve. When it is marked with a tick or a cross, it is not clear what makes the work good or give guidance about how the pupil can improve it.

## SCIENCE

86. The 2001 teacher assessments for pupils aged seven showed attainment to be very low in comparison to the national average and the number reaching the higher than expected level to be well below the national average. The work seen during the inspection suggests that the attainment of the seven-year-olds in 2002 will improve significantly and is above what is expected nationally. The results of the 2001 national tests for pupils aged eleven show attainment to be very high in comparison with the national average, with all pupils achieving the expected standard. The number achieving at higher levels was close to the national average. The performance of eleven-year-olds is a considerable improvement since the last inspection and is now above what is expected nationally.
87. By the time that they are seven, pupils effectively record the results of their observations and investigations through the use of pictures, charts and their own brief written text. They begin to make predictions about expected outcomes, for example, when investigating the growth of seeds. An investigation had been set up to alter the conditions of growth and the pupils made good predictions and measurements. They know how humans and mammals change as they grow and what the young animals need to do so. They investigate and pictorially record simple electrical circuits with bulbs, wires and batteries.
88. By the time that they are eleven, the pupils record investigations in a consistent format, and design investigations to ensure that they are fair. They make informed predictions about results and then control these through the limited introduction of variables. They know the names and functions of the major organs of the body and the types of food needed to maintain health. They have investigated the specific properties of materials, the nature of solids, liquids and gases and the physical requirements for changes in state. They are familiar with apparatus, scientific terms and the need for accuracy while conducting their research.
89. The pupils' literacy skills are used well and pupils follow instructions and experience many opportunities to develop factual writing skills in their science notebooks. Worksheets are used appropriately throughout the school and pupils of all abilities are encouraged to write their own accounts of their investigations. This is a strength of the subject, and contributes a great deal to the lively response that pupils demonstrate. Their attitudes towards science activities are very good, and they demonstrate a good level of co-operation in carrying out their investigations. As a result, their investigative skills are developing well. This is an improvement since the last inspection.
90. Throughout the school, pupils make suitable use of their numeracy skills as they use accurate measurement to record quantities and demonstrate the ability to construct line graphs from numerical data. For example, in the Years 4 and 5 class, pupils discovered and refined the most appropriate methods of measuring distance practically when investigating a jumping and throwing activity.
91. Pupils listen particularly well to their teachers and to the contributions of others. They demonstrate very good recall of scientific vocabulary and previous learning and can relate this to topics under discussion. Pupils enjoy their science lessons, work eagerly and enthusiastically at the practical activities and show high levels of concentration and co-operation. The pupils with special educational needs are well supported by teachers and teaching assistants within the classroom. This enables them to make

good progress in science. However, there is scope for further challenge for the highest attaining pupils in Years 5 and 6.

92. The quality of teaching in science is good, which is an improvement since the last inspection. The strengths of the teaching are grounded in very good management of the pupils, the teachers' secure subject knowledge, and good relationships with pupils. Very effective use is made of questioning by teachers to extend the pupils' thinking. Cross-curricular links are made where appropriate. For example, in an earlier science week looking at science through literacy, each class took a different children's fiction book as a starting point. Where detailed drawing of plant material was needed after close observation in a Year 1 lesson, the quality of the techniques used owed much to their skills in art. Similarly, Years 4 and 5 pupils used their physical education skills of throwing and jumping when investigating the effect of limb length on performance.
93. The subject is managed very effectively. There has been some classroom observation to monitor the quality of teaching and learning in the school, but this programme has yet to be fully developed. Resources to support science are good. The science curriculum is planned well throughout the school to a consistent format, meeting the requirements of the National Curriculum. Assessment of pupils' progress is satisfactory. The pupils' work is marked conscientiously, although there are variations in the amount of advice given to pupils through teachers' marking as to how they could improve their work.
94. There was little evidence during the inspection of the use of information technology to support learning within the subject due to the constraints of space and the equipment located centrally.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

95. Only one lesson was observed during the inspection, but evidence of work and displays throughout the school and discussions with teachers indicate that the pupils' attainment is good and standards are above national expectations throughout the school. This is an improvement since the last inspection.
96. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress and achieve well. The quality of teaching and learning during the inspection was good. Pupils' attitudes are very good, demonstrated by their enthusiasm to draw from a range of stimuli. These included drawing with pastels from observations of fruit and vegetables, copying pictures of plants by famous artists in wax crayon and sewing a collage to represent a variety of natural materials they had collected from the beach. Good teaching was typified by the teacher using modelling strategies to explain how to use pastels in observational drawing. Pupils' behaviour during the lesson observed was good.
97. Displays throughout the school demonstrate a high regard for the pupils' art. There are examples of their work from all classes framed and mounted on walls. Displays are of a high standard throughout. One very good example from the reception class demonstrated that the children had observed and painted in the style of Monet's "Regatta at Argenteuil". All pupils are taught the full range of skills and knowledge and understanding of art as required by the National Curriculum so that they are able to explore ideas using a range of media. Good examples include weaving in Years 1 and 2, pottery work and digital camera pictures in Years 3 to 6. The pupils use sketch books and have linked with another local school to share good practice. The school

has planned an arts week that includes pupils working with artists in a variety of media forms. These include landscape painting and illustrations.

98. The subject is managed well. Resources are well stored and labelled. There is a good range of materials for pupils to use and explore. Planning is thorough with cross-curricular links made with other subjects. A good example of this is the Years 4 and 5 project which combined art, design, information technology and English in story telling. Assessment is made through the collections of pupils' work which record individual progress through the key stages.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

99. The pupils reach standards that are above the national expectation throughout the school. This is an improvement since the last inspection.
100. In the Years 1 and 2 classes pupils are able to generate simple ideas and use a range of techniques correctly. For example, the pupils had designed and made glove puppets, exploring their ideas and saying what they would need in order to make them. The pupils can use tools such as scissors and staplers safely and choose suitable materials like paper, card, straws or fabric from which to make items. They know how to join things in a variety of ways such as gluing, taping, stapling or tying.
101. By the age of eleven, pupils explain the design process confidently. They understand the importance of planning and explain that ideas need to be sketched out and refined first. They can use words such as 'improve' or 'modify' correctly when speaking about designing. They can evaluate the performance of the things they have made, for example when exploring the performance of a compound beam constructed from rolled tubes of newspaper. The pupils have positive attitudes to the subject. They speak enthusiastically about activities and can describe how they have designed and made a number of items. The pupils from the Years 4 and 5 class explained the steps they had taken to produce a range of model chairs on display. A group of pupils in Years 5 and 6 discussed how they had designed two forms of bridge structure, and how they had improved the designs. Their class had worked on designs for a shelter and the whole class had constructed a full sized version of the favoured design in the grounds.
102. During the inspection only one lesson was taught. The quality of teaching and learning in this lesson were good. The pupils confidently tried out ideas and considered why some were less successful than others. Evidence from the work, and of finished projects, along with photographic records of activity, confirms that the quality of teaching and learning is good across the school. The pupils with special educational needs made good progress in the lesson seen.
103. The subject is well managed. The co-ordinator has a good understanding of the requirements of the curriculum for the subject. Although all classrooms have sufficient power points, only one has running water and the current space for practical work and for storage of resources is very limited in the school, particularly in the smallest classroom and for the class based in the hall. This has been recognised in the provisions of the current building project. Consumable resources are good. Teaching assistants, parents and other members of the community make a substantial contribution to standards in design and technology because they organise activities that enrich the curriculum for the pupils. For example, the school runs an extra-curricular Young Engineers Club and pupils in Year 5 have taken part in the "Goblin Car Challenge" to build a functional vehicle that culminated in an endurance race on Hastings Pier.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

104. During the inspection only three lessons were taught. Observation of these, together with scrutiny of the work, the range of work on display and discussions with pupils, suggests that the standards achieved are above the national expectation throughout. This is similar to the last inspection.
105. In their work on settlements, the pupils in Year 1 explain what a map and plan are and apply their knowledge to produce a plan of their own daily journey to school. The pupils in Year 2 study coastal features and compare their own village of Icklesham with a small Scottish island community. They describe, in simple terms, the differences in communication and facilities. They know what an atlas is and some of its features, but are not sure how it might be used. They have a good knowledge of the local area, and those areas further a field such as Hastings and beyond.
106. In contrast, pupils in Years 4 and 5 make quite extensive use of maps, and used atlases and world maps to locate places during their study of the southern Indian village of Chembakolli. They have studied and contrasted their experience of landscape features and everyday living in Sussex with India and have made good use of secondary sources of information including a very impressive collection of artefacts. Good teaching in the older classes was highlighted by the amount of genuine choice that was offered to pupils and made after group discussion of high quality. The good relationships built up by their teachers help to sustain a very positive working attitude by the pupils. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 have undertaken a comparative study of tourism in Hastings and Grasmere where the higher attaining pupils produced tourist brochures of very high quality. By the age of eleven most pupils have a good grasp of the key facts and concepts in geography. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress as a result of the teachers' knowledge of their abilities and very effective support in the classroom from their teaching assistants.
107. The pupils' skills in literacy and numeracy are well used and where it is appropriate there are good links to the other subjects of the curriculum. For example, houses and homes have good links to science and co-ordinates are used in mapping.
108. In the lessons seen, the overall quality of teaching was good. Teachers share the lesson objectives with the pupils, encouraging interest, concentration and involvement in completing the tasks and investigations. Higher attaining pupils receive encouragement and high expectations of completing tasks both quickly and with greater depth.
109. The subject is co-ordinated well. The nationally published guidance for the subject provides useful support for teachers and the resources for the subject including maps, atlases and globes are good although further versions of local aerial photographs and very large scale maps and plans would be a useful addition. The provision of appropriate resources supports their learning. The use of assessment in geography is largely informal and the marking of the pupils' work varies between classes. Very good use is made of visits in the immediate locality and locations further a field for pupils to acquire first-hand experiences and information.

## **HISTORY**

110. The standards pupils reach are in line with the national expectation at the ages of seven and eleven. During the inspection it was not possible to observe any history lessons

being taught. However scrutiny of the work in pupils' books, the displays, teachers' planning and the scheme of work for history show that teaching and learning in this subject are effective across the school. This is a similar picture to the last inspection.

111. By the time they are seven, the pupils retell stories from history and can say how times have changed. They know the names of many historical characters and retell their stories or write them in their own words. They have studied Florence Nightingale and the conditions of ordinary people living in her time.
112. By the age of eleven pupils know the key features of the ancient civilisations of Greece and Egypt, give sensible descriptions of what life was like in a number of periods in history such as in Roman and Victorian times and in Britain in the 1950s and 1960s. They carry out in-depth historical investigations using a range of resources and evidence. They have used interviews, factual books and fictional stories to research their work and produce projects of good quality enhanced by illustrations and the use of information technology.
113. The subject is well led overall. The use of assessment to gauge the pupils' progress is not well developed, and the way the pupils' work is marked varies between classes. The school makes very good use of educational visits in order to enrich the pupils' experiences of historical environments, for example, through contacts with the Rye Museum, by visits to the Imperial War Museum in connection with the unit on World War II and to Anne of Cleves' house in Lewes when studying Tudor life. Parents and grandparents make a positive contribution to historical studies by generously loaning artefacts that the pupils can examine and discuss. Resources are good and are constantly being developed, particularly through the collections of artefacts to support individual topics.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

114. In the last inspection the standards attained by pupils aged seven were satisfactory, but the standards attained by the majority of the oldest pupils in the school were below the national expectation. The inspection findings indicate that standards have been maintained for pupils aged seven and have improved for the older pupils and now meet those standards expected nationally. The pupils learn appropriately, but the recent building extension work and lack of space has hindered the progress made. No whole class lessons were observed in Years 1 and 2 and only one lesson was seen in a Years 5 and 6 class. Evidence from past work, discussion with pupils, and observation of activities outside the classroom were taken into account.
115. Some of the younger pupils already have some experience of using computers when they move into the Year 1 class. These skills develop appropriately as they move into the next class and year. The pupils use the mouse and keyboard effectively, and know how to use a simple CD-ROM based research program to supplement their lesson. A teaching assistant, who has appropriate skills to advise the pupils, oversaw this activity effectively. Some Year 1 pupils also use the programmable floor robot called a 'roamer' to learn simple ways of instructing it to move in different directions. By the time they are seven, the pupils use the computer to complete simple word processed tasks and worksheets. They use the word processor to write about their family and details about themselves. In discussion with them, the pupils know that some toys use technology to make them work, in addition to devices such as video recorders. The teaching is good and makes appropriate use of the computers. The pupils are motivated by clear organisation and activities that are relevant to them. They learn

satisfactorily, although the small classroom in Years 1 and 2 prevents additional computers being used to supplement the ones in the shared areas.

116. By the time they are eleven, the pupils consolidate these skills and some supplement them by using computers at home. In a Years 5 and 6 class, the teaching satisfactorily guided the pupils. Half of the class worked appropriately with Excel spreadsheets, entering data and varying it to obtain different totals. The remainder of the class worked on some mathematics activities but this did not readily support the main task taking place. A helper supported the teacher effectively and his additional knowledge helped the pupils make good progress in their learning. A residential trip to a centre that specialises in computer work supported the pupils' knowledge and understanding, particularly in programming and in art and computer animation techniques. The pupils word process effectively, and computers are used appropriately across different areas of the curriculum such as measuring angles in mathematics, research in history using the Internet, and in some aspects of art and design using simple drawing programmes. In a Years 4 and 5 class, the pupils use a programme called "Super Logo". They increase their knowledge appropriately of simple programming learnt previously in other classes. The teaching is satisfactory overall, and improvements have been made so that pupils now learn the appropriate skills.
117. The pupils use digital cameras to take pictures of activities in the school, and they use the Internet effectively to research projects. For example, in history, some pupils used a combination of pictures, word-processing and Internet to illustrate their project work. In discussion with the pupils they know how to send E-mails and the highest attaining pupils are familiar with sending attachments, and using the best search engines on the Internet. The control aspect of the programme of study is still a weak aspect of the subject and although the pupils could describe the principles of control technology, they do not really have the opportunity to use or develop their knowledge.
118. The management of the subject is satisfactory. The policy and scheme of work is based upon national guidance and is supplemented by a published scheme. Most of the staff have taken part in the nationally provided training, and the remainder will be completing their training soon. The resources have improved since the last inspection, and there are plans to improve them further with LCD projectors and interactive whiteboards. The arrangement of having computers in shared areas works appropriately, and the additional equipment may improve learning and access to more equipment. The assessment arrangements are being reviewed to make assessing the pupils' progress against the National Curriculum levels easier. The school has established links with a local business partnership and has helpers who come into the school to support activities.

## **MUSIC**

119. In the last inspection, the standards of attainment were judged to be in line with national expectations. Only three lessons were observed, two in Years 1 and 2 and one in Year 6. The indications from these lessons and from discussion with the pupils are that the school has sustained the standards reached in the last inspection.
120. In Year 1, very good teaching motivates the pupils effectively. They sing clearly and in tune. The pupils enjoy singing and the rhythm work that follows on from the introduction to the lesson. Individual pupils play simple percussion instruments skillfully, which they use well to keep to a beat. The teacher skillfully develops the pupils' understanding of pitch. The use of symbols to help visualise the different sounds their voices can make enhances their learning. In Year 2, the pupils develop

their appreciation of different compositions such as the 'Carnival of the Animals'. The majority of them recognise how the music is used to create different images and the sounds that remind you of them. The teaching inspires the pupils well, with quick changes of activities from singing, to listening, to composing. This has the effect of making the lesson fun, and increases their learning in singing and listening. Their composing skills develop appropriately, although the limited choice of instruments and lack of recording on paper what they compose limits their value. The pupils' skills in listening are developed particularly well. They enjoy the use of simple songs and 'follow me' activities to improve their learning and refinement of these skills.

121. In Years 5 and 6, the focus on developing singing skills is enjoyed by the pupils. Good teaching throughout the school motivates them to sing a range of songs, and they are particularly confident in singing in two or three parts. They know the songs well. This helps them to sing in tune and with good levels of volume and enthusiasm. The pupils also know what an 'ostinato' pattern is and how it can be played on a xylophone. A comparative weakness in the teaching is that few pupils are given the opportunity to conduct or influence the singing of the class using different hand signs for example. Throughout the school, the pupils with special educational needs make good progress, assisted by good teaching and sensitive help for teaching assistants. All pupils are made to feel involved in the activities taking place.
122. The management of the subject is satisfactory overall. The school follows a two-year cycle of activities, and some additional specialist teaching enhances the teaching. The pupils' progress is assessed, although this is not always consistent throughout the school. There are plans to improve the level of resources, particularly instruments, although the quality and number are satisfactory overall. The school arranges additional peripatetic teaching covering woodwind and violin. The school regularly arranges concerts at Christmas and other festival times, and the pupils sing regularly at assemblies.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

123. In the last inspection, the pupils attained standards that were above the national expectation throughout the school. During the three days of the inspection only two lessons were planned in Years 3 to 6 and no lessons were planned in Years 1 and 2. The building work has reduced the opportunities for indoor work, but the school has tried hard to maintain the minimum provision necessary. The pupils attain standards that are in line with those expected nationally, although there is evidence to indicate that some pupils reach higher standards. It is not possible to judge the standards pupils reach in Years 1 and 2.
124. Outdoor activities were planned in Years 4 and 5 and Years 5 and 6. These develop the pupils' skills in throwing, catching and simple tactics of fielding. In Years 4 and 5 the pupils throw accurately, develop their catching skills and many hit the ball consistently. A small proportion are less confident in their hitting skills, lacking good hand/eye coordination. The teaching is satisfactory overall and maintains a good pace by changing the activity frequently, although the introductory warm up was comparatively brief and the pupils were not reminded of its importance sufficiently. The lesson was well structured in that the pupils developed their skills and then applied them into small-sided games. The pupils enjoy these activities and take part sensibly and enthusiastically. In Years 5 and 6, the pupils are taught the basics of warming specific parts of the body, and the activities are well planned. The pupils have good levels of ability in throwing, catching and hitting, but with smaller bats. Many of the pupils have very well developed hand and eye coordination. Other pupils in the class

develop their skills effectively in small-sided rugby games, supervised by a student teacher. They make space well, and know the tactics needed to enable better passing. The pupils cooperate well, and give their fellow classmates encouragement despite winning or losing. The additional help is managed well by the class teacher, and this improves the pupils' learning by reducing the numbers of them in each group. The pupils with special educational needs make good progress within lessons and all pupils are included within the activities taking place.

125. The management of the subject is satisfactory overall. The school has developed a number of positive links with other schools and regularly takes part in tournaments. For example, the school won the small schools cricket trophy, and were runners up in the local football competition. This additional dimension effectively supports the day today activities that take place. The policy and scheme of work provide suitable guidance for other staff. The assessment of pupils' progress relies too heavily upon an informal system and does not accurately record their progress over the year. The introduction of initiatives such as 'Top Sport' provides both equipment and training for the school, has had the effect of promoting the status of the subject. The co-ordinator has been proactive at developing his expertise over a range of subjects such as football coaching and dance. The level of resources in the school is satisfactory, and the school playing field and swimming pool are good features that are used well. The hall has had restricted use due to a class using it, but this should be resolved by the autumn term when the extension work is completed.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

126. During the last inspection the pupils' attainment throughout the school were found to be sound with appropriate progress being made. This inspection indicates that the school has maintained its position. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress. Statutory requirements are met and the subject is taught in accordance with the locally agreed syllabus. During the inspection only three lessons were observed but teaching was good throughout. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen during the inspection.
127. By the end of Year 2 pupils re-tell some of the parables from the Bible. In Years 1 and 2, the pupils explore Christianity through visits to the local church and discussing christenings. They learn about traditions from other religions such as when the children discussed Diwali and Hanukah. Good teaching made effective use of resources including books, posters and artefacts. The children's learning was enhanced by being able to see and touch a menorah.
128. By the end of Year 6 pupils talk about aspects of the Bible, the Jewish faith and other religions. In one lesson observed the pupils demonstrated a good knowledge of the Old Testament. Teaching was made stimulating by singing in Hebrew, the use of clear learning objectives and work planned for different abilities. Lower attaining pupils were supported by teaching assistants during this lesson that enabled the pupils to access the material. However, their dialogue during the direct teaching was a little distracting for other pupils. Generally, however, pupils behave well and attitudes to religious education across both key stages are good. Pupils learn about different faiths through their work in Years 3 to 6, but have little opportunity to apply this knowledge.
129. The management of the subject is sound. The local curate has been involved in developing the subject and reports back his findings to the headteacher. Although the subject is well planned with cross-curricular links where applicable, recording in books is sometimes irregular and infrequent and monitoring of spoken contributions from

pupils needs to be noted to ensure adequate coverage. Presentation is generally good with basic marking taking place. Assessment is made through comments made on weekly planning sheets. Resources are good and well deployed by teachers to ensure effective teaching. Display is used to celebrate work and to inform pupils as the display on the Passover demonstrated.