

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **SIR HENRY FERMOR CE PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Crowborough

LEA area: East Sussex

Unique reference number: 114548

Headteacher: Fran Huff

Reporting inspector: Michael J Cahill  
19623

Dates of inspection: 26 - 29 November 2001

Inspection number: 194733

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and junior
School category:	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Crowborough Hill Crowborough East Sussex
Postcode:	TN6 2SD
Telephone number:	01892 652405
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Jean Hare
Date of previous inspection:	21 April 1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
19623	Michael Cahill	Registered inspector	Information and communication technology Design and technology	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? a) The schools results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils taught? What should the school do to improve further?
11041	Marvyn Moore	Lay inspector		How high are standards? b) Pupils' attitudes, value and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
16773	Raminder Arora	Team inspector	Foundation stage English as an additional language Art and design History	
10611	Martin James	Team inspector	Special educational needs Science Geography	
18370	Kevin Johnson	Team inspector	Equal opportunities Mathematics Physical education	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
11901	Pat Lowe	Team inspector	English Music	How well is the school led and managed?

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

This bigger than average voluntary aided Church of England primary school educates 362 full time pupils (184 boys and 178 girls) aged from four to eleven. Fourteen boys and nineteen girls who are under five years of age attend the reception class in the mornings only. Most pupils have had some pre-school experience and their attainment on entry is in line with the national expectation. The socio-economic nature of the area is favourable. The vast majority of pupils are from white backgrounds; there are eight pupils for whom English is an additional language. The school has 82 pupils on its register of special educational need, about the number to be expected in a school of this size; one pupil has a full statement of special educational need, which is below the expected number.

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

This is a good and improving school with many very good features. The school is very well led and managed; the headteacher and the governing body have correctly identified priorities for improvement and how to achieve them. The quality of teaching is high and there is a very pleasant and purposeful working atmosphere. In 2001, the national test results at the age of eleven exceeded the national average in English and mathematics and matched it in science. Pupils achieve well and develop very good attitudes to learning. Their behaviour and personal development are very good, as are relationships throughout the school. This effective school provides good value for money (unit income per pupil is close to the average for all schools).

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

- Pupils' attainment at eleven in speaking and listening, mathematics, science, design and technology and aspects of physical education exceeds national expectations for their age.
- The caring and very effective leadership of the headteacher, very well supported by her deputy, other senior staff and the governing body, is promoting a very good level of improvement.
- The quality of teaching is high; pupils want to come to school and have very good attitudes towards their learning.
- The school is very successful at promoting very good behaviour and personal development; relationships throughout the school are very good.
- A broad and interesting curriculum, enriched by a very good programme of extra-curricular activities for the junior classes, is provided for all of the school's pupils.
- The school is very successful in encouraging parents to be involved in their children's education through supporting their homework and helping in school.

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

**In the context of its many strengths and its existing agenda for development, the school recognises the need to improve:**

- Pupils' attainment in information and communication technology across the school.
- The provision for promoting the physical development of children in the reception classes through outdoor play.
- How it prepares pupils for life in today's multiethnic society.

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

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

The school has made a very good level of improvement since the last inspection in 1997, shortly after the appointment of the present headteacher. The school has dealt very effectively with the issues identified at that time and has also considerably improved the overall quality of teaching. National Curriculum test results at eleven are improving, having previously fallen after the last inspection; standards of behaviour are very good. The very strong partnership between the governing body, headteacher and staff and the very good level of involvement of parents provide a very good basis for further improvement.

## STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 6 based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	1999	2000	2001	2001	
English	C	C	B	D	well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E
Mathematics	B	C	B	C	
Science	D	D	C	D	

*Schools are described as similar when they fall into the same band for free school meals, in this case less than eight per cent. At present 6.4 per cent of pupils claim their entitlement.*

Children in the reception classes are on target to achieve in line with national expectations when they move into Year 1. The school is successful in enabling most of its pupils to achieve the national standard for seven-year-olds. However, the proportion of pupils achieving above the national standard at seven was lower than expected in 2001, so that results overall in reading and mathematics fell below those achieved in schools nationally; in writing they remained in line. National averages have gone up and the school's results have not. However, local education authority statistics show that most pupils made good progress compared with their attainment on entry to the school. The school is now targeting specific children with the potential to achieve the higher Level 3.

The school's results for eleven-year-olds have not kept pace with national improvements over the last five years although the picture over the last three years, following a dip in 1998, is much better. The most recent results show an improvement in each of English, mathematics and science compared with the previous year although the school failed to meet its own challenging targets in English and mathematics in 2001. When comparisons are made with schools whose pupils performed to a similar standard in the tests for seven year-olds in 1997, the school's results at eleven were average in English and science and above average in mathematics. Pupils achieved well during their junior years.

The inspection team judged that attainment is in line with national expectations for seven-year-olds in all of the subjects of the National Curriculum apart from information and communication technology (ICT) where standards are too low, and design and technology where pupils exceed expectations. The attainment of the current eleven-year-olds is in line with national expectations in art, geography, history and music and most aspects of English except for speaking and listening where it exceeds expectations. Pupils also exceed expectations in mathematics, science, design and technology and aspects of physical education but fail to reach national standards in ICT.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils enjoy coming to school and enthusiastically involve themselves in lessons and in extra-curricular activities. Their attitudes to school are very positive.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Pupils behave in a mature and sensible way both in lessons and around the school.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships are very good. Pupils welcome being given responsibility; their personal development is very good.
Attendance	Attendance is consistently well above the national average and pupils arrive punctually for the start of the school day.



Relationships are a real strength of the school. Pupils have very good attitudes towards each other and their work. This is very largely due to the good example set by the adults in the school community.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	Satisfactory	Good	Good

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

The quality of teaching is high. During the inspection, the teaching in many lessons was at least good, including a substantial minority that were very good; there was no unsatisfactory teaching. This represents a considerable improvement since the last inspection. The teaching of English, including the skills of literacy, was never less than good, including a high proportion of lessons that were very good or excellent in both the infant and the junior classes. In mathematics, including the skills of numeracy, teaching was always at least satisfactory; in the junior classes it was very often good or very good.

The vast majority of pupils develop very good work skills, taking pride in what they do and acquiring a questioning and investigative approach to learning. They respond well to encouragement and work hard, concentrating for long periods when tasks are interesting. Most pupils develop very good attitudes to themselves as learners and become confident in their ability to learn and to communicate with others.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The school provides a rich and interesting curriculum including all the subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education, although there is inadequate provision for teaching the full curriculum in ICT. Provision for the areas of learning in the Foundation Stage is sound, except that facilities for outdoor play are inadequate. The curriculum is enhanced through a very good range of extra-curricular activities.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Pupils make very good progress towards the targets agreed for them as a result of the very good arrangements that the school makes for supporting them.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Pupils are supported well and make good progress in developing their English speaking skills.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	This is satisfactory overall. Provision for social and moral development is very good; the school uses a very good range of strategies to promote collaboration among pupils, who have a clear sense of right and wrong. Provision for spiritual development is satisfactory. The weakness is in preparing pupils for life in multi-cultural Britain.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school is a caring community. Pupils benefit from the support and guidance that they receive. There are good procedures for keeping track of pupils' progress in English, mathematics and science.

The school has very good links with parents, many of whom are very involved in their children's learning.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher provides very sensitive and effective leadership directed towards raising standards through improving the quality of education provided. She has established a strong senior management team, which makes a very good contribution to the smooth running and development of the school.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors fulfil their responsibilities in an exemplary manner. They have an excellent understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and are committed to its further improvement.

The school's evaluation of its performance	The governing body, headteacher and senior staff keep all aspects of the school's performance under continuous review. There are very good procedures for checking on standards. Monitoring of teaching and learning has led to improvements in quality.
The strategic use of resources	Development and financial planning are very good. The school manages its budget very well and makes good use of specific grants to target key areas for school improvement. The school actively seeks to obtain the best value for the money available to it.

The level of staffing, accommodation and learning resources are good apart from the provision for teaching ICT and the lack of adequate, separate, outdoor play facilities and resources for the reception children. The school has already identified these two areas for improvement in its development planning. Particular strengths of the school's leadership and management include the shared vision and commitment of the headteacher, staff and the governing body.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

The views of the 145 parents who returned completed questionnaires and of the 12 who attended the pre-inspection meeting with the registered inspector were taken into account. Percentages refer to questionnaire returns.

What pleases at least 90 per cent of parents	What some parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Their children like school and they make good progress.</li> <li>• Teaching is good and the school has high expectations of children.</li> <li>• Behaviour is good.</li> <li>• The school helps children to become mature and responsible.</li> <li>• They are comfortable about approaching the school with questions or problems.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information about their children's progress. (21 per cent)</li> <li>• The range of activities outside lessons. (13 per cent)</li> <li>• How well the school is managed and led. (20 per cent)</li> <li>• The degree to which the school works closely with them (21 per cent)</li> <li>• The amount of homework (18 per cent)</li> </ul>

The inspection team agrees with the positive views expressed by parents. Inspectors judge that parents are kept very well informed about their children's progress and that the school is now well led and managed. The range and quality of extra-curricular activities is very good. Homework is making a good contribution to improving pupils' achievements and many parents are very involved in their children's learning and the work of the school.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. The attainment of most children on entry to the reception class is in line with what is expected for their age. Most children have taken advantage of some form of local pre-school experience. They are happy to come to school and achieve satisfactorily during the Foundation Stage. Children's attainment on entry to Year 1 is in line with national expectations for nearly all children in all areas of learning. There is no noticeable difference in attainment between girls and boys.
2. The school's year 2001 National Curriculum test and assessment results show that at the age of seven pupils' attainment was below average compared with the national averages in reading and mathematics, and in line with the national averages in writing and science. There were no significant differences in the performance of boys and girls. The school's performance was well below average in comparison with similar schools. However, local education authority statistics show that most pupils made good progress compared with their attainment on entry to the school. Most pupils achieve the national standard of Level 2 but too few achieved the higher Level 3 and this depressed the overall results. The school has recognised that its provision for more able pupils has not been well enough targeted. In the current Year 2, specific pupils have been identified as having the potential to achieve Level 3 in writing, mathematics and science and have been provided with appropriately demanding work. The absence of this in the past has been the main reason for relatively lower results than similar schools.
3. The year 2001 national test results for eleven-year-olds were above the national average in English and mathematics and in line with it in science. When compared with those of similar schools, results in 2001 were close to but below the average in English and science and in line with the average in mathematics. When comparisons are made with schools whose pupils performed to a similar standard in the tests for seven year-olds in 1997, the school's results at eleven were average in English and science and above average in mathematics. Over the period 1997 to 2001, results at the school have not risen in line with national improvements, although those for the last four years show a good level of improvement from the dip in 1998. Girls have not performed quite as well as boys in English and mathematics tests but have done better in science over the period 1999 to 2001. Targets set for this year group were not reached in either English or mathematics. (See paragraphs 76 – 103 for more detailed information about pupils' overall attainment and their performance in national tests in English, mathematics and science)
4. Inspection evidence indicates that the attainment of the pupils at the age of seven is in line with the national expectation in English, mathematics, science, art, geography, history, music and physical education. In design and technology pupils' attainment is above the national expectation and in information and communication technology (ICT) it is below it. At eleven, the attainment of most pupils is above the national average in mathematics, science, design and technology and aspects of physical education, including swimming, games and cross-country running. In English, standards are above, often well-above, national expectations in speaking and listening. In other aspects of English and in the other subjects of the National Curriculum, except for ICT, pupils' attainment is in line with national expectations. [For further details of pupils' achievements and progress in the Foundation Stage and in the subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education, see paragraphs 59 - 146].
5. Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress in relation to the targets set for them, and good progress overall. They are provided with good levels of support from their teachers and the teaching assistants, their targets are regularly evaluated and reviewed and, when necessary, new targets are appropriately set to aid progress. The school is improving its identification of more able pupils and providing them with extra challenge, for example in the mathematically based 'logical thinking' group. This has helped some more able pupils to achieve more highly in national tests. The small number of pupils for whom English is an additional language are effectively supported by their teachers and achieve well.

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

6. Pupils' attitudes to the school are very good. The school is an extremely orderly community and pupils demonstrate very good behaviour; relationships are very good
7. Pupils' attitudes are extremely positive; they enjoy coming to school, are enthusiastic about lessons, and show a great deal of interest and maturity in their learning. They are extremely keen to enjoy the many opportunities that the school provides, including the wide range of extra-curricular activities. In lessons, pupils work very hard, relate extremely well to each other and to adults and enjoy the company of visitors. At playtimes and lunchtimes, pupils play extremely well together and relate to each other well. During the inspection week, the inspection team was impressed by the courtesy and friendliness shown to them by the pupils.
8. The pupils' behaviour in the school is extremely good. The few school rules are comprehended and respected by the pupils and their very good behaviour amply reflects the strong Christian ethos of the school. In assemblies pupils enjoy the teachings of Christ and demonstrate and understand very well the school's ethos of caring for others. There have been only three fixed period exclusions during the past year.
9. Pupils have a strong knowledge of the impact of their behaviour on others and understand and respect the feelings and beliefs of other people. Pupils have a strong respect for their own belongings, other people's property and school property. During the inspection week pupils were observed treating computers, art and physical education equipment with care. The school does not suffer from graffiti and there is no vandalism.
10. Pupils' personal development in terms of relationships is well promoted by the school. Relationships between pupils, peer groups and staff are very good. Pupils work well together and harmoniously in shared tasks. For example, in a personal health and social education lesson observed during the inspection week, Year 6 pupils discussed in a mature way their perception of racism and showed a clear understanding of the cause and effects of discrimination. In a science lesson, Year 3 pupils worked very well in pairs to identify parts of the human skeleton, were keen to answer questions and developed a knowledge and understanding of collaborative working.
11. Pupils' with special educational needs are well integrated into the school and enjoy their achievements. They pay close attention to adults and persevere with their tasks. They are very well behaved, and get on well with other pupils.
12. Pupils are given ample opportunity to display personal responsibility and initiative. Year 6 pupils act as duty assistants at morning break and at wet lunchtimes. Lunchtimes are pleasant, social occasions and it was noted during the inspection week that Year 6 pupils play with and guide younger pupils, help them with games and are delighted to look after them. Visitors are very warmly welcomed into school by pupils who are articulate and at ease with them. Pupils greatly enjoy showing their work and take pride in showing visitors their school.
13. Attendance at the school is very good. Lessons always start on time; pupils demonstrate good behaviour when entering and leaving the classroom and are punctual coming to school. The inspection team fully agrees with parents' strongly held belief that behaviour in the school is good. The extremely good behaviour of pupils mentioned in the previous report and efforts made by the school to promote good behaviour, have been well maintained.

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

14. The overall quality of teaching is good, with a significant proportion of teaching that is very good or excellent, particularly in the junior years. Of the lessons observed, 31 per cent were judged to be very good or excellent, a further 37 per cent were good, 32 per cent were satisfactory and none were unsatisfactory. This represents a considerable improvement since the last inspection, when 17 per cent of lessons were judged to be very good and seven per cent were unsatisfactory. The reasons for the improvement include the school's successful adoption of the national strategies for literacy and numeracy, changes of teaching staff and increased emphasis on monitoring by the headteacher, deputy headteacher and other senior staff.

15. The teaching of English, including the skills of literacy, was never less than good and was very good or excellent in three-quarters of lessons in both the infant and the junior classes. In mathematics, including the skills of numeracy, teaching was always at least satisfactory. In the junior classes the teaching of mathematics was good or better in two-thirds of lessons, including more than two-fifths that were very good.
16. The teaching provided for pupils with special educational needs is very good. Teachers, together with the co-ordinator and teaching assistants, make very good individual educational plans for pupils on the register of special educational needs. The teachers and teaching assistants have a clear understanding of the needs of the pupils; they work closely together and provide a suitable range of activities and work for them. Positive relationships are established and help and support are constantly provided. These pupils achieve well in relation to their targets. Pupils who speak English as an additional language are well known to their teachers, who provide well for their learning needs.
17. **Features common to the good or better teaching seen during the inspection included:**
- clear identification of what pupils are to learn and sharing this with them;
  - good questioning at the start of lessons to revise what has already been learned;
  - a clear focus on practical activities and tasks, well chosen to enable pupils to learning what they are supposed to;
  - teachers' very good skills at building on and extending pupils' answers, with an insistence on full explanations;
  - very good relationships between adults and pupils, with well-established classroom routines;
  - good teamwork between teachers and their assistants;
  - effective use made of information and communication technology;
  - high expectations of the standard of pupils' work and behaviour.
18. **Where some lessons were less successful, although still satisfactory, the reasons included:**
- what pupils were to learn was not identified clearly enough and/or was not shared with them;
  - the time allocated to the lesson was not appropriate so that **either** there was insufficient time for checking and confirming learning **or** the lesson was too long and the pace and level of challenge were not quite right;
  - not enough account was taken of the wide range of ability and existing knowledge in the class;
  - a small number of pupils who found it difficult to concentrate distracted others through their behaviour.

### **Learning and progress**

19. Pupils' learning and progress were judged to be at least good in two-thirds of the lessons observed. The vast majority of pupils develop very good work skills, taking pride in what they do and acquiring a questioning and investigative approach to learning. They respond well to encouragement and work hard, concentrating for long periods when tasks are interesting. Most pupils develop very good attitudes to themselves as learners and become confident in their ability to learn and to communicate with others. Pupils of all levels of ability benefited from the usually good match of the tasks set and challenges presented to what they were to learn.

### **The quality of marking**

20. The quality of teachers' marking in books is inconsistent, although good examples exist where teachers' comments explain both how pupils could improve as well as praising what they have done well. At worst, it consists merely of ticks or crosses without any clue as to how these have been earned and without any instruction to correct what was wrong or improve what was not good enough.

### **Homework**

21. Homework is set regularly and is making an important contribution both to raising standards and to involving parents more fully in their children's education. [For further details about the quality of teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage and in the subjects of the National Curriculum, see paragraphs 59 - 146]

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

22. The school has successfully addressed the issues that were identified in the previous inspection report and now provides a well-planned programme of relevant and worthwhile experiences for all

pupils. Provision is particularly strong in the areas of design and technology and in physical education and mathematics in Years 3 to 6. It is weaker in information and communication technology (ICT) throughout the school because too little time is given to the teaching of skills and their application to learning in other subject areas. There is satisfactory provision for personal, social and health education including the teaching of sex education and the dangers of misusing drugs. The curriculum for children under five is sound overall, but the provision of resources and facilities for outdoor play to promote physical and social development is unsatisfactory.

23. Pupils are given good opportunities to practise their numeracy and literacy skills throughout the school because of the teachers' effective use of the national framework to plan learning programmes. Pupils who are less able than others are given opportunities to keep pace through the provision of additional literacy support and the 'Springboard' mathematics programme. However, this sometimes limits their access to other parts of the curriculum such as history or art, because they regularly miss out on those subjects during the period of the programme. The allocation of time for some lessons and the use of time within some lessons is too inflexible. For example, in some geography lessons pupils are not able to sustain their interest for a whole afternoon, so some of the time is unproductive. Some lessons in music and physical education are too short in relation to what it is planned that all pupils should achieve.
24. Pupils on the school's register of special educational needs are very well provided for in the way the school identifies their learning difficulties and organises support for them. Their curriculum is made more relevant by the use of individual learning programmes and also because they receive some individual and small group teaching. These plans are reviewed each term and pupils are fully involved in all appropriate activities. The school is beginning to recognise the needs of the most able and gifted pupils in the school, but currently there are no formal procedures for identifying and supporting them.
25. The very good range of activities provided outside school hours enriches the curriculum. These include a very good range of sports opportunities as well as art, music, dance and mathematics clubs. All clubs are very well attended and have a positive impact on the standards seen in the school. Pupils' learning is further enriched by visits to places of environmental or historical interest. Visitors to school such as theatre groups to enhance learning are less frequent.
26. There are good links with the community, and these promote opportunities for sports. Local and county clubs provide coaching sessions. Participation in local festivals and events features strongly in the school's annual calendar. Liaison with the adjacent secondary school is very good. The exchange of information ensures a smooth transition between phases for the pupils. The school supports students on initial teacher training courses very well and also welcomes students seeking work experience.
27. The school has broadly maintained its provision for pupils' spiritual development, which was judged to be satisfactory at the time of the last inspection. Some assemblies make a sound contribution, when pupils are encouraged to reflect on the way they can prepare for the Christmas celebration for example, or when they share their thoughts with others in a simple prayer. In one assembly pupils were encouraged to think about those who experience sadness and the responses they shared were thoughtfully expressed. Opportunities occur in story time, for example when reading books such as *Badger's Parting Gift*, which touches on the feelings and emotions expressed at the loss of loved ones. The observance of silence on 11<sup>th</sup> November each year also provides time for reflection. Pupils occasionally enjoy the creativity of learning, for example when 'Spacelab' visits the school to set up the miniature planetarium. The creation of the millennium walk in the school grounds and the mosaic, to which all pupils contributed, helps them to recognise their place in the passing of time.
28. Provision for social and moral development is very good. This has improved since the last inspection. Pupils' moral development is firmly rooted in the ethos and expectations of the school. The school's routines are clear and pupils' efforts and achievements are recognised and rewarded during assemblies. Teachers ensure that pupils are aware of their responsibilities towards others and strongly encourage a sense of fair play. There are very good opportunities for pupils to develop social skills. During lunchtime, for example, pupils share their time in friendship groups and attend lunchtime clubs such as mathematics or choir where they learn to collaborate with others. Pupils share playground equipment, learning to take turns.

29. There are many opportunities during the lessons for pupils to share investigative tasks, to improve their ability to negotiate and work effectively with others. The opportunities to welcome visiting teams and to take part in events outside of school also provide valuable opportunities for social development.
30. Provision for pupils' cultural development is unsatisfactory overall. Pupils gain a reasonable understanding of their own cultural heritage through history lessons and visits to places of interest. They also celebrate 'Henry's Birthday' each year in memory of the founder of their school. However, the school recognises that too few opportunities and experiences are planned and not enough is done to prepare pupils for their life in an ethnically and culturally diverse society.

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

31. Procedures for child protection and ensuring pupils' welfare at the school are satisfactory. Children are well known to the adults in the school and receive a good level of assistance and support whilst at school. Care and concern for pupils are displayed by staff and their positive attitude is reflected in the good progress pupils make in their life at school. They thrive in the strong learning climate.
32. The school has satisfactory procedures for promoting child protection. The named child protection officer is well aware of her responsibilities; child protection records are good. The school recognises the need to ensure that all staff, including those new to the school, receive appropriate training in child protection matters. Accidents are recorded but the records do not give details of treatment given to pupils. The school has an adequate number of first aiders all of whom are fully trained and other health and safety procedures are relevant and up to date.
33. A health and safety audit has been carried out by the governing body in 2001 and any items identified as a health hazard have been addressed by the school caretaker, who also carries out an informal check of the building at regular intervals. He keeps excellent records of chlorine levels in the swimming pool and fire alarm tests are regularly carried out.
34. The school has simple but effective procedures for the monitoring and recording of attendance. Registers are marked regularly, are accurate, neat and fully comply with legislation. Absences are followed up well by the secretary who liaises with the education welfare officer.
35. The school gives very good educational and personal support to pupils. All pupils are known well to staff and they are able to relate to them and know who to go to for support and guidance. Pupils with special educational needs are regularly assessed and a wide variety of information is recorded to help identify pupils' current attainment. The information gained is normally used most effectively to provide suitable new work for the pupils.
36. The school has very effective procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour, and the monitoring and eliminating of oppressive behaviour. The school rules are based on reward and sanction and they are readily understood by pupils and consistently applied by staff. Staff quickly deal with the rare incidents of bullying or challenging behaviour in a most appropriate manner and as a result, pupils feel they are safe and secure. During the inspection week, no incidents of bullying or challenging behaviour were observed and pupils confirmed to the inspection team that they felt that the school was approachable, it was consistent in its handling of poor behavioural matters and they feel secure in the school environment.
37. The school employs an adequate number of staff to supervise pupils in the playground both at break and in the lunchtime and, because of the school's strong pastoral arrangements and the care and concern shown to pupils, they are able to make extremely good progress.
38. In the previous inspection report, assessment was identified as a key area for improvement. Arrangements for assessment were less well developed in subjects other than English and mathematics. The school was required to develop whole school assessment procedures so that teachers had a clear and common understanding of pupils' achievements and were effectively guided in their curriculum planning to match all levels of abilities. There has been good improvement in the development of clear procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress. Much work has been done to address this issue.



39. The school has gathered a suitable range of assessment information since the previous inspection and is now able to track progress made by pupils from the infants through the juniors in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. The standardised test data, such as assessment on entry to the reception classes and pupils' attainment in the national tests, is carefully evaluated and analysed to mark the performance of different groups and individuals. Teachers are able to identify what progress each pupil has made and use this information to set statistical targets for future improvements in learning. This system also helps in identifying pupils to be targeted for extra help and assistance, for example those with the potential to achieve better levels of attainment. Whilst the school has a good range of assessment information available in English, mathematics and science, assessment in other subjects is not yet formalised.

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

40. Parents hold positive views of the school. The school works extremely hard to foster a strong relationship with parents and fully involves them in all aspects of their children's education. A very high proportion of the parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire said that:
- Their children like school and they make good progress.
  - Teaching is good and the school has high expectations of children.
  - Behaviour is good.
  - The school helps children to become mature and responsible.
  - They are comfortable about approaching the school with questions or problems.
41. A large majority approved of:
- The information they receive about their children's progress.
  - The range of activities outside lessons.
  - How well the school is managed and led.
  - The degree to which the school works closely with them.
  - The amount of homework that their children receive.
42. The inspection findings confirm all these views. The positive links that the school has with parents, and their effectiveness in the school, are very good. All parents are warmly welcomed into school and many parents – and some grandparents - help the school in a large number of ways. They aid work in the classroom and help by accompanying pupils on out of school activities; and feel free to come into school at any time they wish to discuss their children's progress.
43. During the inspection week parents were observed in the school helping pupils with reading and helping staff teach pupils to swim.
44. The quality of information provided by the school about pupils' progress is very good. Reports are extremely clear and well written, giving precise and concise information about pupils' progress, target setting and a good explanation of pupils' grades.
45. The school has produced a parent friendly brochure, which is well presented and gives full information about the various school policies and the school's ethos. In addition, regular newsletters are produced which give full information about events and activities being promoted by the school. There is a very active Parent Teacher Association, which raises large sums of money for the benefit of the school and their work is much appreciated.
46. The school holds two consultation evenings per year where parents have an opportunity to come into school to discuss pupils' progress. In addition, year group information meetings are held at the beginning of each year to enable parents to have advance information of the coming year's syllabus and expectations that the school has of pupils' progress. These arrangements are much appreciated by parents.
47. There are good arrangements for the admission of pupils and the transfer of pupils to the next stage of education. Parents of children, prior to their entry into reception, are invited to come into school for a 'taster day' and are encouraged to stay with their child until their child settles into a routine. This enables pupils to make a good start and settle comfortably into school. The school has made good arrangements for the staff at receiving secondary schools to meet Year 6 children and parents are given full information about receiving schools and the various opportunities available to them.

48. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are kept well informed of the reviews of their children's individual education plans, so that they are fully aware of the provision being made for them. Parents of pupils with statements are invited to the annual review meeting.
49. The extremely strong partnership the school has with parents and the positive way that parents contribute towards their children's education have a very strong impact on the progress that pupils make.

## HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

50. The leadership and management provided by the headteacher and key staff are very good. They share a common purpose and put pupils and their achievements first. The school's aims and values are reflected in all its work. This represents very good improvement since the last inspection, when leadership was unsatisfactory in many areas. The headteacher's leadership ensures clear educational direction. She has managed the many changes, such as the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies, very effectively. She has established an effective senior management team, with the result that communication within the school has improved. The deputy headteacher and the other members of the senior management team have clearly defined roles. They provide very good support for all staff. All work together well for the benefit of the school. Subject leaders also make a valuable contribution to subject development. They are very clear about what is needed to improve provision and raise standards. There are plans for all subject leaders to monitor teaching and learning in other classrooms; this is desirable further development of their role. Through their regular scrutiny of teachers' planning and pupils' work and their action plans, they already make a valuable contribution to school improvement.
51. The effectiveness of the governing body in fulfilling its responsibilities is excellent. Committees and roles and responsibilities are firmly established. Governors are fully involved in school improvement planning. Their role in shaping the direction of the school is excellent. They are well informed about the work of the school. They have an excellent understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school, through their analyses of National Curriculum test results and comparison of these with similar schools and other schools in the area. Governors fully recognise the need to improve national test results at seven to their previous level, after last year's downturn. Teaching staff are invited to governors' meetings to present policies and schemes of work. Governors visit the school regularly; they all have a link with a curriculum area and, through this link, they are involved in the monitoring and evaluation process. Some governors also help regularly in classes; others take assemblies or help with clubs.
52. The school's priorities for development, such as the establishment of an information and communication technology (ICT) centre, are entirely appropriate and the action taken to meet the school's targets in the school improvement plan is very good. Educational priorities are supported through the school's financial planning. The school's financial officer is very efficient and is very well supported by the school's clerical staff. All expenditure is systematically budgeted for. Forward financial planning for three years ahead is being introduced. Governors regularly monitor the school budget. They know that the systems for financial administration are efficient and responsive to need, through regular updates and reports from the school. They have started an audit trail. The principles of best value are rigorously applied. The governors consider spending decisions in relation to priorities for improvement that, first and foremost, will benefit pupils, for example, the recent appointment of two midday supervisors to organise playground games. From their own monitoring of lessons and monitoring by the headteacher and senior staff, they analyse the extent to which all pupils benefit from targeted spending.
53. The monitoring, evaluation and development of teaching is very good. There are very good procedures for checking on standards and they are used very well to effect improvement. The results of assessments on entry to the school at four and of National Curriculum tests are carefully analysed and are used to set targets for improvement. Individual pupil progress is tracked and individual targets are set. The headteacher and senior staff regularly monitor teaching and learning in the classroom. The results are used to assist the development of individual teachers. They also highlight common areas for improvement. The success of this monitoring is evident in the much higher proportion of very good teaching observed in the inspection. Subject leaders and the headteacher regularly check samples of pupils' work.
54. The leadership and management of special needs are very good. It is a significant factor in the good progress made by these pupils and reflects the school's policy for inclusion. The requirements of the Code of Practice for special needs are fully met. The specific grant for special educational needs is used very effectively for its designated purpose. The governor with responsibility for special educational needs is very well informed and meets regularly with the co-ordinator for special educational needs. Regular reports are given to the governing body regarding special needs' provision.

55. The school's strategy for performance management is good. The national requirements for performance management of teaching staff are fully in place. The legal requirements for professional development opportunities and the setting of targets from regular observations are strictly adhered to and are having a positive impact on pupil achievement. Arrangements for the induction of new staff to the school are good. Newly qualified teachers are well supported by an induction mentor. Other staff, who are new to the school and to a year group, are well supported. There are good guidelines for students on work experience placements in the school and for the school staff involved in the placements. The school is very effectively involved in the training of new teachers. The overall effectiveness of the school is good and there has been very good improvement since the last inspection. The shared commitment to further improvement and the capacity to succeed are very good.
56. The match of teachers and support staff to the demands of the curriculum is good. The level of staffing is good. All teaching staff are suitably qualified and experienced to teach the subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education. Teachers in the Foundation Stage have received training in teaching towards the early learning goals. The level of staffing in the reception class is appropriate and teaching and non-teaching staff are experienced in meeting the needs of young children. There is a co-ordinator for special educational needs. Teachers are supported effectively by efficient teaching assistants who are deployed well. They make a good contribution to the attainment, progress and self esteem of pupils with special educational needs and pupils for whom English is an additional language. The school's promotion of inclusion is effective.
57. Accommodation is good, overall. Classroom accommodation is good. It is well maintained and is enhanced by good displays that support and value pupils' achievement. There are adequate storage facilities in the classrooms, corridors and resource areas. The libraries are spacious and adequately stocked. They are used well by individuals and groups. The school is in the process of establishing an ICT suite. Outside provision is good, except with regard to outdoor provision for the reception class, which lacks a fenced off area with safe areas for play. There is a lack of climbing and balancing equipment, wheeled toys and a range of other resources appropriate for children's physical and personal and social development, as well as reinforcing learning in communication, language and literacy, knowledge and understanding of the world, and mathematical and creative development. The school field, swimming pool and millennium walk are additional resources, which are used well. Resources, throughout the school and in all areas of the curriculum, are adequate overall, except with regard to ICT. They are of satisfactory quality and are used well.

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

58. **In accordance with the existing agenda for school development, the headteacher, with the governing body and staff, should plan to improve:**

**(1) Pupils' attainment in information and communication technology across the school by:**

- Making more use of the existing classroom based computers;
- Urgently pursuing plans for improving access to computers for all pupils;
- Arranging appropriate staff training;
- Planning more opportunities for using information and communication technology to support and extend learning in all areas of the curriculum.

See paragraphs 22, 86, 106, 128 – 134. *This area for improvement is included in the school's current development plan.*

**(2) The provision for promoting the physical development of children in the reception classes through outdoor play by:**

- Providing a separate, fenced and gated outdoor play area;
- Improving outdoor play resources;
- Giving the children opportunities to play independently together in a safe setting.

See paragraphs 22,57,74. *This area for improvement is included in the school's current development plan.*

**(3) The extent to which it prepares pupils for life in today's multicultural society by:**

- Increasing staff awareness of the importance of planning opportunities in this aspect of the curriculum;
  - Using its programme of visits and visitors to promote positive images of multiethnic Britain;
  - Making links with schools with a much more varied ethnic mix of pupils.
- See paragraph 30

**In addition, the governors should indicate in their action plan how they intend to:**

- Review and improve the current allocation of time to subjects, especially those other than English and mathematics;

See paragraphs 18, 23, 126

- Improve the marking of work so that pupils and parents can more easily see what needs to be improved and how;

See paragraphs 20, 85, 101

- Extend the good practice in assessment in some subjects to the rest of the curriculum;

See paragraphs 39, 108, 120, 127

- Develop further the role of all co-ordinators in terms of monitoring and supporting teaching and learning in their subjects.

See paragraphs 50, 108, 120, 127

*These areas for improvement are included in the school's current development plan.*

- Improve the balance of structured and child initiated activities in the Foundation Stage curriculum.

See paragraphs 62, 67,68.

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	68
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	80

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	4	17	25	22	0	0	0
Percentage	6	25	37	32	0	0	0

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

### Information about the school's pupils

#### Pupils on the school's roll

	YR - Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	376
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	23

#### Special educational needs

	YR - Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	82

#### English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	8

#### Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	20
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	31

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.2
National comparative data	5.6

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.2
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	38	21	59

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	31	35	35
	Girls	20	20	19
	Total	51	55	54
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	86 (84)	93 (94)	92 (94)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	36	35	35
	Girls	21	19	20
	Total	57	54	55
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	97 (95)	92 (94)	93 (78)
	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	33	30	63

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	26	25	30
	Girls	27	24	29
	Total	53	49	59
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	84 (77)	78 (75)	94 (88)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	27	27	30
	Girls	27	24	28
	Total	54	51	58
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	86 (81)	81 (86)	92 (92)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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



### ***Ethnic background of pupils***

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	2
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	3
Chinese	3
White	336
Any other minority ethnic group	5

*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)	15.9
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23.6
Average class size	26.9

**Education support staff:** YR - Y6

Total number of education support staff	11
Total aggregate hours worked per week	166

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### ***Recruitment of teachers***

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	4.2
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	4.4
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

*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	3	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

### ***Financial information***

Financial year	2000/2001
	£
Total income	770022
Total expenditure	781950
Expenditure per pupil	1885
Balance brought forward from previous year	62640
Balance carried forward to next year	50712

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

37%

Number of questionnaires sent out

394

Number of questionnaires returned

145

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	61	37	1	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	44	48	3	0	4
Behaviour in the school is good.	36	60	2	0	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	19	58	12	6	6
The teaching is good.	53	41	1	1	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	31	46	17	4	3
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	54	36	9	1	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	52	41	3	1	2
The school works closely with parents.	26	43	18	3	10
The school is well led and managed.	27	43	14	6	10
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	43	50	4	0	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	43	30	12	1	14

Some rows do not add to 100 because of rounding

### Other issues raised by parents

Some parents are concerned about pupils' safety because of double-parking on the yellow zigzag lines outside the school and because the entrance to the school is through the car park.

There was also disappointment at the rate of improvement of resources for information and communication technology

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

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

59. National policy and guidelines have made significant changes to the curriculum recommendations for the youngest children. All children under six in the reception classes are now part of the Foundation Stage of learning and inspection reports focus on children's progress towards the early learning goals<sup>1</sup> at the end of the reception year.
60. The school does not have a nursery class. Children are admitted to the reception classes in the September following their fourth birthday. They begin to receive full time education from the start of the term in which they become five. At the time of the inspection, 11 children were attending full time and 32 attending part time. Most children's level of attainment on entry is broadly in line with expectations for their age and many have attended the local playgroup, with which the school has established close links.
61. Analysis of the assessments that the reception teachers make after the children have joined the school shows that over the past few years children's abilities on entry have been less well developed compared with previous intakes. This has been most noticeable in the areas of communication, language and literacy and personal, social and emotional development. In the reception classes, children are following a broad range of experiences and achieve well in the nationally recommended six areas of learning (see footnote).
62. It is not possible to make specific evaluations of changes in each area of learning since the last inspection as the last report described provision in general rather than specific terms. On the evidence of the work of those pupils who were in the reception classes last year, most children reach the expected levels in all areas of learning by the time they move to Year 1. Those who are the youngest of the group, and have only one term of fulltime attendance in the reception classes, are not as advanced in their learning as expected, and this affects their overall achievements. The school's co-ordinator for the early years provision has ensured that the new curriculum for the Foundation Stage is now well established. The curriculum provides experiences that are relevant and imaginative, for example, the 'Class Café', opportunities for cooking and creative work such as collage, painting and drawing. The planning broadly reflects all areas of learning and is appropriately linked to the advancement of children's skills, knowledge and understanding. It is extended to embrace the literacy and numeracy strategies mostly in the summer term when all children attend full time. Teachers' planning is based on clear learning objectives for all areas of learning on a daily basis. Assessments take place on entry to the reception class, and these are used satisfactorily to inform the planning of subsequent work. The Foundation Stage curriculum is not planned to provide an effective balance of structured and child initiated activities. The outdoor provision, a potentially good resource for learning, is unsatisfactory.
63. In addition to the assessments taking place on entry to the reception classes, there are consistent procedures for assessing children on a day-to-day basis to check and record children's on-going progress. The resources are satisfactory overall and easily accessible. These are well organised and used effectively for all areas of learning. The spacious teaching areas are organised into well-defined work places, but not always visually attractive, inviting and stimulating learning areas.
64. Most children make satisfactory progress in all areas of learning. They achieve particularly well in social, emotional and personal skills. Children with special educational needs receive well-planned extra support to enhance their progress.
65. The overall quality of teaching in all areas of learning is satisfactory. It is good in the areas of communication, language and literacy, mathematical development and personal, social and emotional development. The teachers plan together and provide a suitable range of activities with clear intentions. They know how young children learn and extend their responses sensitively. Both teachers are technically competent in teaching basic skills and use methods that enable children to

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<sup>1</sup> Early learning goals - these are expectations for most children to reach by the end of the Foundation Stage. They refer mainly to achievements children make in connection with the following six areas of learning: communication, language and literacy; mathematical development; personal, social and emotional development; knowledge and understanding of the world; physical and creative development.

learn effectively. Supported by the on going observations of children's progress, the teachers carefully ensure that their expectations of work and behaviour are appropriate and the tasks match children's level of functioning and skill. Some samples of children's work are collated, but these are not always analysed to objectively inform and clearly link teaching to match different abilities. Homework in the form of reading books is used particularly well to enhance children's progress. The adults work effectively as a team and support one another.

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

66. By the time they leave the reception class, children are likely to achieve most of the early learning goals in this area. They are confident about what they can achieve in most learning situations. They quickly settle down and feel both happy and secure at school. Children learn to co-operate, share and take turns. They work both as part of a group and independently. They begin to form positive and respectful relationships, and to communicate effectively with one another and with adults. Children show consideration and respect for property and each other; for example, when sharing musical instruments and passing these round to each other. They are attentive and eager to learn, and enjoy sharing their work with any available adult.
67. Teaching is good for this area of learning. The adults act as good role models for children and help them to listen well and understand set routines. Children are effectively taught the difference between right and wrong and guided to behave sensibly at all times. Most children participate enthusiastically in teacher-led activities, but opportunities for self-initiated activities are generally lacking. Children are not sufficiently encouraged to explore freely and set up own imaginative group play. The learning areas are always well prepared and organised with a satisfactory range of interesting activities. The children are managed skilfully and kept purposefully occupied.

### **Communication, language and literacy**

68. Most children show good gains in learning and are on course to attain most of the early learning goals by the end of the reception year. They willingly talk about the aspects of their work, speaking clearly and in full sentences. They enjoy listening to stories and readily share books with adults and with each other. Children talk about their experiences interestingly and develop new vocabulary, for example when making cakes with parent helpers. They respond well to stories; for example *Goldilocks and Three Bears*. Children showed very good recall of the story when working with an adult and using story props. Teaching is good. Children are skilfully supported through constant encouragement to talk and share experiences. All adults value children's efforts at communicating. Some children in the class are gaining satisfactory control in developing early writing skills. They draw and paint with increasing control and most children are gaining appropriate skills to form letters correctly. There is effective adult intervention and appropriate support given to children in learning the initial letter sounds. By the end of the year, many children are ready to produce good meaningful sentences unaided. However, opportunities to work freely at a well equipped 'mark-making table' and attempts at independent play writing and drawing are currently limited.
69. The children enjoy using favourite storybooks, and are aware of the beginning, the middle and the end in a story. Very good progress is made when adults work in small groups or on a one to one basis to give children individual attention. Most children in the reception classes write their own name unaided and copy short and simple sentences. Teachers effectively familiarise children with written vocabulary through stimulating activities to focus on key words. This was noted in a lesson, where the teacher successfully used the game called, 'word bingo' to make learning effective and enjoyable. A significant number of children are successfully developing a good sight vocabulary and confidently recognise the familiar words in their early reading books. The assessment procedures and the recording of children's day-to-day progress in reading effectively support children building on what has already been achieved. They handle books carefully and know how these are organised. Many children in the reception class associate sounds with words and letters and all are encouraged to take books home and share with adults. The literacy lessons modified to suit the very young effectively promote the development of early reading, writing and spelling skills later in the year.

### **Mathematical development**

70. Most children are on course to reach the early learning goals in mathematics by the end of the Foundation Stage. They match, sort and count using every day objects, for example, counting to 20 and beyond. A few children are beginning to count and order numbers accurately up to 10. Teaching

of mathematics is generally good. Opportunities for practical activities are suitably planned. Children enjoy activities such as drawing numbers in the coloured shaving foam. One teacher used 'registration' as an opportunity to count children using the abacus. In another session the higher attaining children were engaged in recording sets of objects for a given number. The more able in the group, capable of making representations and writing the number symbols independently, did not receive suitable opportunities to extend themselves. A few children recognise basic shapes and gain some knowledge of capacity and weight from practical experiences with sand and water. Some older children describe objects by position, shape, size, colour and quantity. They enjoy working with large and small construction equipment. Most children demonstrate early knowledge and understanding of how to solve simple problems involving addition and subtraction, and use vocabulary such as, 'add one more' or 'take one more away', 'how many altogether' and 'how many left?' Adult involvement in children's activities is good and useful timely assessments of the individual children's progress are made on a regular basis.

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

71. Most children are likely to reach the expected early learning goals in this area by the end of the reception year. Children achieve well through opportunities for growing and planting, cooking, tasting and observing change in materials. They work with sand, water and explore properties of malleable materials, such as play dough. They use paint to mix different colours and most name basic colours correctly. There are opportunities for children to explore with everyday objects of interest as well as select from a variety of materials, for example, making paper plates of favourite food and developing skills of cutting, joining, folding and building. Most children demonstrate well-developed computer skills for their age. They show increasing control in the use of a mouse to move items on the screen. The use of computers to enhance children's learning is not promoted as much as it could be in the reception classes.
72. There is effective adult intervention in activities and encouragement to children to develop a good knowledge base through well-planned topic work. For example, a group of children engaged in identifying different smells used their sense of smell and taste effectively and built on their knowledge of ingredients such as marmite, honey and lemon. Children's understanding of 'self' and 'family' is supported through activities such as eating in the class café.

## **Physical development**

73. The quality of teaching of physical skills in the classrooms is satisfactory. When engaged in cutting and gluing children demonstrate reasonable hand and eye co-ordination. Opportunities are limited for further developing children's confidence and manipulative skills in the use of a range of materials and tools, for example, making models from different mediums, such as clay and junk modelling. However, most children are capable and active, and on course to meet the expectations of early learning goals in this area.
74. Most children are well co-ordinated, play safely and are aware of space and others around them. In a swimming lesson, a group of children demonstrated much advanced confidence and skill in the water. The skilful teaching by the swimming instructor effectively supports children who attain beyond the expectations. Children in both the reception classes receive regular swimming lessons and most are very confident swimmers by the end of the year. Teachers also make regular use of the main school hall and the available large and small apparatus. The outside provision is unsatisfactory and the available outdoor resources are insufficient to promote the development of fine and large physical skills.

## **Creative learning**

75. Most children are on course to meet the early learning goals. They experiment with paint and use their observations and imagination to create pleasing results. These include paper-plate face puppets and printing pictures produced by mixing paints, blue and yellow to make green. Children sing and clap, and express enjoyment in musical activities. They know the words and sequences of actions to several rhyming songs and confidently demonstrate their skills to others. For example, in a lesson they practised making sounds with tongues, hand and feet and recognised loud and quiet or soft sounds made by using claves. Most children learn new songs quickly and memorise words. They have a good repertoire of songs that they sing enthusiastically with good rhythm and volume, for example, the song of the 'Red Indian Chief' and 'If you're happy and you know it'. Opportunities for

children to explore sound and depict ideas and feelings through using percussion instruments are well planned.

## ENGLISH

76. **The attainment of pupils in reading in the 2001 National Curriculum tests for seven-year-olds** was below the national average for the proportion of pupils achieving the national standard of Level 2 or above. The percentage of pupils achieving the higher Level 3 was also below the national average. Attainment was well below the average for similar schools. These results represent a decline since 2000, when attainment was in line with the national average, although it was well below the average for similar schools. This is largely due to the decline in the number of pupils attaining the higher level.
77. **The attainment of pupils in writing in the 2001 National Curriculum tests, at the age of seven,** was in line with the national average for the proportion of pupils achieving at Level 2 or above. The percentage of pupils achieving the higher Level 3 was below the national average. Attainment was well below the average for similar schools. This maintains the position in 2000, when attainment was in line with the national average but below the average for similar schools. The decline in standards with regard to similar schools can also be attributed to the decline in the number of pupils attaining the higher level. Standards in reading and writing were judged to be above national expectations at the last inspection. They have been consistently in line or above, in the national assessments in recent years.
78. **The attainment of pupils in English in the 2001 National Curriculum tests, at the age of eleven, was above the national average at Level 4 or above.** The percentage of pupils achieving the higher Level 5 was also above the national average. However, results were not as good as those in similar schools across the country. Nevertheless, this represents an improvement compared with the previous year when attainment was in line with the national average and well below the average for similar schools. The rise in standards in 2001 can be attributed to the more accurate tracking of pupil progress against National Curriculum levels, not only by the school but also by the pupils themselves. Standards are slightly higher than at the time of the last inspection but national averages have risen more.
79. **Inspection findings confirm that the attainment of pupils in reading is in line with national expectations at the age of seven and at the age of eleven.** Progress in reading for most pupils is good, standards are rising and achievement is good. This improvement reflects the school's efforts to raise standards by the consistent use of good reading schemes, opportunities for pupils to read on a one-to-one basis to adults, planned opportunities for reading in every area of the curriculum and targeted support for struggling readers. There are paired reading sessions between younger and older pupils. Pupils have regular opportunities to visit the school libraries and borrow books for reading at home. Older pupils use the computerised system independently. Parental help at home is an important factor in the raising of standards. The help of parents in school is also very valuable. Of the 80 or so parents and other members of the community who help in school on a regular basis each week, a large proportion are engaged in hearing pupils read.
80. The regular use of the reading schemes, the school libraries and the study of texts in the literacy hour help pupils to attain standards that are at least satisfactory and often good or better. Pupils follow a structured reading programme. They read to teachers, teaching assistants and volunteers from the community, on a regular basis. By the age of seven, pupils' reading of simple texts shows understanding. Most pupils express opinions about the story and use more than one strategy to read unfamiliar words and establish meaning. Pupils in Year 6 respond well to a range of texts in the literacy hour and across the curriculum. They show understanding of significant ideas, themes, events and characters. They are beginning to use inference and deduction. They are taught to retrieve and collate information from a range of sources. The school libraries are used for the teaching of library skills. The school is aware of the need to carry out an audit of fiction and non-fiction books and to update them where necessary. It has used its resources well to purchase attractive texts for the literacy lessons and some fiction and non-fiction books for use throughout the school. Pupils are expected to read at home for a short period each day. This practice is well supported by parents, enabling pupils to make progress. A number of pupils belong to local libraries and read an increasingly wide range of fiction and non-fiction books.
81. **The attainment of pupils in writing is in line with national expectations at the age of seven and eleven and is rising.** Progress is good and most pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, achieve well. A curricular target is to work towards an overall improvement in writing throughout the school, with the intention of producing a 10

per cent increase in the number of pupils attaining Level 2a/3 by the age of seven and Level 4 and above, by the age of eleven. Rigorous monitoring is carried out to ensure that all pupils are working at the right level and individual targets are challenging. Pupils are encouraged to self-correct their own work and to plan, draft and redraft their work. There are planned opportunities for writing in all curriculum areas. Appropriate emphasis is placed on handwriting and spelling skills. Writing objectives are shared with pupils each lesson and an evaluation session takes place at the end. Pupils' increasing success in writing is shared with others at celebration assemblies and their work is displayed in the school. Work sampling and lesson observations during the inspection indicate an improvement in writing levels. Individual pupils show 'value added' improvement.

82. **The attainment of pupils in speaking and listening is above and often well-above national expectations.** Pupils are very friendly and converse well with adults in the classroom, corridors, dining room and playground. In the shared reading sessions, pupils listen well. They respond well to questions and discussions. There are carefully planned opportunities to promote speaking and listening skills across the curriculum. Pupils are encouraged to express their ideas and explain their views.
83. **The strategies for teaching literacy are good.** Where planning is in line with the National Literacy Strategy, the structure of the literacy hour is proving beneficial in raising standards. Investment in appropriate resources has helped teachers in their delivery of the curriculum. In the best lessons, there is a strong emphasis on the use of subject-specific vocabulary, thus extending pupils' subject knowledge and general vocabulary. This extends to mathematics, science and other subjects. Lists of subject-related vocabulary are displayed in all classrooms and regularly referred to.
84. During the inspection, pupils in Year 1 made progress in their understanding of rhyme. Pupils in Year 2 used phonological, contextual, grammatical and graphic knowledge to check the meaning of unfamiliar words and make sense of what they read. They made good progress in their understanding and confidently discussed how they overcame problems in their comprehension task. Pupils in Year 3 gained understanding of the features of non-fiction texts, making links with history and religious education as they studied facts about the Romans and the Hindu festival of Diwali. Pupils in Year 4 identified the features of instructional texts and wrote instructions for others to follow. Pupils do not always apply their literacy skills across the curriculum; for example, in a Year 4 science lesson, almost half the pupils had found it difficult to record very much, although one able pupil wrote; 'This brilliant torch has coloured light beams. If you push the star it comes on. It is now storming in the UK for only £6.99.' Year 5 pupils discussed the features of play scripts, particularly the use of production notes and stage directions. Pupils in Year 6 examined the differences between balanced and ethical report writing and reports that are not well balanced and may be unethical. Pupils expressed well-considered views on whether Antarctica should be preserved or exploited and whether Britain's sharks should face extinction.
85. **The quality of teaching and learning is good throughout the infant and junior classes.** It was good in a lesson observed in Year 1 and very good in two lessons observed in Year 2. Good teaching and learning was observed in one lesson in Year 3; it was very good in another lesson. In the lesson observed in Year 4, teaching and learning were very good. In the three lessons observed in Year 5, teaching and learning were good, very good and excellent, respectively. Teaching and learning were good in a lesson observed in Year 6; in another lesson, teaching and learning were very good. Teaching which is good, or better, is characterised by detailed planning which sets clear objectives that are understood by pupils and are reviewed at the end of the lesson. As a result, pupils are interested and motivated and apply intellectual and creative effort to their work. Teachers show good subject knowledge and understanding and teach phonics, handwriting, spelling and other basic skills well. Pupils' acquisition of knowledge, skills and understanding is good, as a result. Very good class management and relationships lead to very good behaviour that, in turn, promotes good learning. Pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language make good progress and achieve well, as a result of very good provision. Two small groups of pupils in Year 3 made very good progress in one lesson, through additional literacy support. The quality and use of assessment, and self-evaluation by pupils, are instrumental to pupils' progress. Teaching methods are effective in promoting learning. Marking, however, is inconsistent. It is good when teachers make evaluative comments that help pupils to know how to make further progress. Regular homework makes a very good contribution to the extension and consolidation of pupils' learning.
86. **The quality and range of learning opportunities are good.** The curriculum is enriched, for example by annual book weeks and visits by authors and poets. Pupils' work is monitored at regular



intervals and samples of work are moderated. Opportunities are provided for pupils to consider moral issues in relation to conservation of the environment. Their social development is enhanced through class groupings and discussions, and through paired reading of older and younger pupils. Information and communication technology is occasionally used in literacy lessons for word processing and research, but its use is under-developed.

87. **Leadership and management of the subject are very good and ensure clear educational direction.** The subject leader has a good overview of teaching and learning, teachers' planning and pupils' work. Resources for the literacy hour are of high quality. Other resources, such as reading scheme books and library books, are becoming dated and would benefit from some replacement and renewal. All resources are used well and are important factors in pupils' good learning.

## MATHEMATICS

88. **Standards seen in mathematics were average in Year 2 and above average in Year 6.** This broadly reflects the results of the most recent (2001) National Curriculum tests for seven and eleven-year-olds. In the four years since the previous inspection the results for seven year olds show a decline overall against the national average and are very low when compared with similar schools. This is largely because the proportion of pupils attaining a higher level (Level 3) in the national tests is below the average for all schools. Results for eleven-year-olds have improved since 2000, although they are broadly the same as at the time of the last inspection. Test data for 2001 shows that the proportion of pupils who attained the higher levels was double that of the previous year. A contributory factor to this is the school's very good use of assessment data to identify groups of pupils who could benefit from more focused support and the subsequent action taken by the school such as ability grouping for lessons in Year 6 and 'booster' classes to improve the performance of specific groups
89. **Pupils' achievement overall is good.** They show very good attitudes to work and improve their skills at a good pace. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, make good progress in lessons because of the quality of teaching they receive. By Year 2 they read and write numbers up to 100 and recognise number sequences and patterns such as odd and even. They count on and back accurately in two's, fives, or tens and mentally work out addition and subtraction problems using numbers to 20. Some can explain clearly the process they use. More able pupils recognise the link between multiplication and repeated addition. Most pupils work in standard measures such as centimetres when measuring and know the mathematical names for two and three dimensional shapes. In Year 6 all pupils have a very good understanding of place value of whole numbers and decimals, as demonstrated by those who accurately wrote on the white board decimal fractions between 0.005 and 0.004. They use written methods accurately to add and subtract and know that division is the inverse process of multiplication. Most recognise fractions and percentage equivalents as parts of one whole such as  $\frac{7}{10} = 70\%$  and use their knowledge to solve number problems. In shape and space pupils identify acute, obtuse or reflex angles by name and use protractors to measure angles accurately. They identify precisely the symmetries of two-dimensional shapes.
90. **The numeracy strategy is well established in the school** and the National Framework is used effectively by teachers to plan clear and systematic programmes of work for each year group. There is a strong focus on investigational work, particularly in number, but computers are not used sufficiently to support data handling or to model mathematical enquiry. Basic understanding of number is taught well, for example when pupils learn to use a range of written methods to solve number problems. Pupils have a sound working knowledge of multiplication tables and addition and subtraction facts such as halving or doubling. These are consolidated at the beginning of the lesson, but some of this time could be used more productively to teach mental strategies which pupils could use to speed up problem solving. Pupils who have additional learning needs are very well provided for through individual learning programmes and by the extra support they receive. They make good progress and achieve well over time in relation to the targets set for them. The small number of pupils for whom English is an additional language make similar progress to others because teachers and classroom assistants are aware of their needs and ensure they are fully included in lessons.
91. **The quality of teaching and learning overall is good.** The strongest teaching was seen in Years 3 to 6, where some lessons were very good. Those lessons were characterised by the clarity and pace of teaching supported by very good use of resources that resulted in very effective and enjoyable

learning for pupils. A good example was seen in the Year 3 lessons, where pupils' knowledge and understanding of fractions were improved because of the challenging game they played. The strategy had the added bonus of improving pupils' social development when they first negotiated then collaborated over the rules of the game. All teachers have good subject knowledge, which they use well to plan lessons. As a result, children of all abilities are suitably challenged in most lessons. Occasionally, however, the teachers' expectations do not match pupils' abilities. In a Year 5 lesson for example, the teacher realised that the task was too difficult for the class, while in a Year 2 lesson an able child was not challenged enough. This meant that those pupils did not make the progress they might have done in those lessons. Teachers question pupils skilfully to probe their understanding and assess progress. This was particularly effective in a Year 4 lesson because the teacher varied the range and difficulty of the questions well in order to test all pupils' understanding of the place value of numbers. The high quality of teaching seen is underpinned throughout the school by the quality of relationships established. Teachers value the contribution pupils make and work hard to ensure lessons are enjoyable. Consequently pupils are eager and enthusiastic learners who respond very well to the expectations and challenges of their work.

92. **Though there are many strengths in the teaching there are also some areas for development.** In the majority of lessons seen, the oral and mental arithmetic session was not sufficiently rigorous to stretch pupils' mental agility and introduce new mental strategies. This is because the objective for that part of the lesson does not identify clearly enough precisely what pupils will know or be better at by the end of the session. Teachers' marking, though accurate and up to date, does not help pupils evaluate what they have done or set immediate targets for improvement. The school is beginning to identify the most able and gifted pupils at mathematics and good work has been done to establish the 'logical thinking' group, which accommodates some of the older pupils and meets outside of normal school time. However, some pupils would benefit from learning programmes that are more specifically tailored to their educational needs.
93. **Leadership by the co-ordinator and her management of the subject are good.** Since the previous inspection she has ensured that all teachers have fully embraced the National Numeracy Strategy and have been supported by appropriate training. The quality of termly and weekly planning has improved and this has a positive impact on the overall quality of teaching exemplified by the significant amount of very good teaching now seen. Systems for monitoring and maintaining the quality of teaching and learning are good and main areas for development are included in the school's improvement plan. A very good system for recording attainment and progress currently gives clear information about pupils from reception to Year 2. The records are passed on annually and will ultimately provide a complete profile of pupils' progress through the school.

## SCIENCE

94. **Standards at the age of seven are in line with the national average; at eleven they are above the national average.** Scientific enquiry is a particular strength and this well supports the development of a good knowledge base as pupils move through the school. Pupils are making good progress, especially with their investigational skills. In the national tests at the end of Year 6 and the teacher assessments at the end of Year 2, in 2001, standards were in line with the national average. Since that time much emphasis has been laid on practical work, with a regular provision being made within lessons. As a result standards have risen further. At the time of the previous inspection, standards were reported to be well above average. The following year, results were below average. Since then results have consistently improved so that they are at the earlier high level. However, the national average has also risen sharply over that time with the consequence that the school's results are no longer well above it.
95. By the age of seven, pupils successfully undertake experiments in many aspects of their work, for example, when learning about electricity in Year 2, and the senses in Year 1. Pupils confidently put forward their own ideas, carry out appropriate investigations and then record their observations. They readily explain the need to make their experiments fair and how to ensure that this is the case. Most pupils successfully name the main external features of both the body and a flowering plant, and they confidently identify the items needed to sustain life.
96. Most pupils recognise and name common materials, such as metal, plastic and wood, and they successfully describe some of their uses. Pupils correctly describe the properties of materials, and they know, for example, that some materials are magnetic and others will float. Pupils readily

describe how many materials, for example bread and chocolate, change when they are heated, and they know that some changes are reversible. Most pupils correctly explain the role of batteries, wires and bulbs in an electric circuit, and know that a circuit will not work if it has a break in it. The pupils are confident in explaining that light and sound come from a variety of sources. Some pupils, however, find it difficult to explain the concept of sound travelling and becoming quieter.

97. By the age of 11, pupils successfully carry out a range of experiments where they identify their own ideas, select their own apparatus, organise their own experiment and make their own observations. They then compare their findings with their original hypothesis. Pupils in Year 6, for example, carry out investigations on dissolving materials and on the conduction of electricity. Pupils in other years also carry out scientific investigations, such as the experiments on gas in Year 5 and sound in Year 4.
98. Most pupils are confident in explaining many of the life processes of humans, and most readily discuss, for example, the workings of the ears and the eyes. Pupils successfully explain the food chain. Most pupils correctly name the various parts of a flower, distinguishing clearly, for instance, between the stigma and the stamen. Many pupils successfully name a variety of materials, they describe their various properties, and they can explain the differences between solids, liquids and gases. Pupils know that materials can be made into mixtures, and many can explain, for example, how a solution can become saturated. They readily describe how materials can be separated through processes such as evaporation and filtration. Pupils know that a complete circuit is needed to make electrical devices work, and most can confidently explain the role of insulators and conductors. Pupils know that objects have weight because of the gravitational pull of the Earth, and most can explain that friction and air resistance are forces that slow moving objects. Pupils know that sound is caused by an object vibrating and that the vibrations travel through air and various materials to reach our ears. Most can explain that shadows are caused by an object blocking the light.
99. **The quality of teaching and learning are good with examples of very high quality practice also being observed.** This is an improvement since the previous inspection. Lessons are generally well planned, with teachers throughout the school making particularly good use of practical activities. This provision is allowing pupils throughout the school to achieve above average standards in this respect. Teachers are also particularly careful to use, and emphasise, the correct scientific terminology, and this is also having a beneficial effect on the pupils' overall learning. Planning, however, does not always make appropriate allowance for the provision of work for lower attaining pupils. On occasions, pupils are all presented with the same activities, and a number of pupils find the work too difficult. In these circumstances they are unable to complete their tasks, and this is having a detrimental effect on their learning.
100. Teachers have good subject knowledge, and provide clear instructions and helpful demonstrations of the work that is to be undertaken. The pupils show great interest in the subject, displaying consistently very good attitudes and much increased confidence in practical work in particular. In such circumstances, most pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, make good gains in their knowledge and understanding of the subject. Where teaching is of a very high quality, subject knowledge is especially secure, expectations are particularly high and pupils are given much independence in carrying out their activities and the concluding parts of lessons are used most thoughtfully to confirm pupils' learning. As a result, pupils make outstanding progress in such lessons.
101. Teachers are always enthusiastic and because of the provision of a range of interesting practical activities, in particular, the pupils are enthusiastic also. Pupils work hard, concentrate well and are keen to find answers to the problems set. The teachers and teaching assistants provide help and well-directed support throughout. Pupils' behaviour is now very good and they work well together in carrying out activities. They are very aware of safety procedures and they present their work neatly and carefully. Teachers mark pupils' work regularly, but few add useful comments of support and advice to help the pupils develop their work further. Homework is regularly set, and is a most useful additional source of learning for pupils.
102. The school now has an appropriate programme of work, based on the government's curriculum guidelines, and this is an improvement since the last inspection. Careful planning ensures that all aspects of work are suitably covered, with the planning for practical activities being extremely thorough. The co-ordinator is keen and knowledgeable, and in identifying many of the weaknesses in pupils' past performance she has played a significant role in improving standards. Her role has

developed significantly since the previous inspection, and she now supports her colleagues well. She sees plans and studies samples of work, and she has regular opportunities to observe the work being undertaken in the classrooms.

103. Good arrangements are now made for assessing the pupils' work, with adequate evidence being kept to identify pupils' current attainment and the progress they have made. However, the information is not always used well enough to provide suitable work for all pupils. The written work undertaken by the pupils, especially that relating to reporting on practical activities, provides support to the school's initiative in literacy. Counting and measuring activities, in various aspects of the subject, support the school's work in numeracy. Information and communication technology is also used, on occasions, to enhance the work in science, such as when pupils in Year 1 used a program on different types of light. Pupils find the subject exciting, especially when carrying out experiments, and the excitement generated by the wonders of science contributes towards their spiritual development.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

104. Only one art lesson was observed and that was in Year 2. However, a survey of the samples of work on display throughout the school, discussions with teachers and with pupils indicate that pupils undertake an appropriate range of activities in which they design and produce artwork of a satisfactory level across the school. Some of the completed work on display is of a good quality, particularly the 'sewing' and 'quilling' produced by pupils in Year 6 attending the after-school art club. An encouraging number of pupils regularly attend the two well-organised art clubs run by two very enthusiastic teachers. The school has adopted national guidance to ensure that the full range of National Curriculum requirements is taught. The recent examples of work in the school's portfolio of art and design confirm the progressive development of required skills across all the year groups. Standards reported in the previous inspection have been maintained and continue to meet the national expectations. Most pupils, including those with special educational needs, show satisfactory progress in the basic skills of collage, drawing and painting. There are sufficient resources of range and quality, particularly the pictures, paintings and photographs compiled by the new co-ordinator to aid teaching and learning of skills in art. The allocation of time to the subject is appropriate. However, there is a lack of emphasis on producing artwork inspired by the work of internationally known artists from around the world. There is also a lack of emphasis on the teaching of the 'design' element of the subject.
105. Most pupils are confidently developing an understanding of some of the aesthetic elements of art. They mix colours carefully to match the skin, eyes and hair in their self-portraits. Pupils used mirrors for this task and tried to get their features in proportion. Year 2 pupils recently visited their local Tudeley Church and produced rubbings of patterns seen on the walls, floor and the windows. They were greatly inspired by this work and were observed in a lesson where they enthusiastically transferred their own designs of different patterns on to the clay tiles.
106. Pupils' skills and knowledge of shape, texture and form are satisfactorily developed. Year 3 pupils discuss portraits that portray relationships. Most pupils demonstrate satisfactory powers of observation, accuracy of detail, shape and size in drawing and colouring with different mediums such as pastels, charcoal and chalk, pencil colours and felt-tips. The 'still life' pictures by Year 5 and Year 4's 'exploring mood', sketching inspired by music, are suitable examples of this work. Pupils are not, however, consistently encouraged to evaluate and make improvements to develop further their own work. The use of sketchbooks to record their work of observational drawings or experiment with line and tone is consistently developed in all classes. However, there is insufficient emphasis in developing computer-aided art and design across the school.
107. Based on all the evidence to hand, the overall quality of teaching is satisfactory. The teachers have good subject knowledge and prepare lessons effectively. The Year 2 lesson provided suitable challenge to develop pupils' art skills and ability to explore with imagination the shape and form in art. As a result pupils show good attitudes to learning. Most pupils show enjoyment, application and involvement. They listen intently, follow instructions well, and are considerate towards others. Pupils attending art club are very enthusiastic about artwork. They show pride in their efforts and react well to praise.
108. Art is suitably linked well to other subjects, such as history and geography. The available resources are organised well for ease of access centrally and in classrooms. The co-ordinator is very clear

about desirable future developments and has good expertise in the subject. There are currently no formal procedures in assessing pupils' progress in art and design skills. The co-ordinators role in monitoring teaching and learning is under-developed.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

109. Standards exceed national expectations at the end of both Year 2 and Year 6. This is a substantial improvement compared with the situation at the time of the last inspection, when standards were below expectations at eleven, having been in line with them at seven. In 1997 curricular planning was inadequate with no overall co-ordination. This weakness has become a strength. The co-ordinator provides enthusiastic and knowledgeable leadership and very good support to colleagues. There is a well planned and resourced curriculum, all pupils have a folder that they build as they move up the school and they are encouraged to be involved in self-assessment of their progress. The status and importance of the subject have been raised and its contribution to the development of literacy, numeracy and group work skills is widely recognised in the school. However, there is little use made of the opportunities presented for linking with the resources and skills of information and communication technology.
110. There were no specific design and technology lessons in infant classes during the inspection. On the evidence of the work in the portfolio and photographs, pupils have developed a good level of understanding of the design process. They have also built successfully on the skills of making that they learned in the reception class. For example, pupils from Year 1 investigated and successfully developed techniques for joining three-dimensional containers and different ways of making hinges. They worked collaboratively to make moving picture books based on familiar nursery rhymes. Pupils from Year 2 benefited from an extended textiles project, making glasses and Joseph's coat.
111. In the junior classes, the focus of the lessons observed was on making torches in Year 4, designing musical instruments in Year 5 and on constructing fairground rides in Year 6. The quality of teaching was always at least satisfactory; overall it was good. The lesson in Year 4 was well planned and resourced to enable pupils to finish making and to evaluate the torches they had designed. Learning and progress were good because of good planning and organisation by the teacher. In particular, the provision of a checklist to enable pupils to track their progress through the project was a useful encouragement to self-assessment. Discussion and evaluation promoted literacy skills well; it was noticeable, however, that pupils were much better at talking about what they had done than they were at writing about it. Examination of the torches that pupils in the two Year 4 classes had made reveals a good understanding of the scientific principles involved. Torches were made to an appropriate scale and the construction skills of cutting, joining, attaching switches made of paper fasteners and clips, making and attaching the bulb holder and adding coloured or plain transparent paper as a lens, were good.
112. Pupils in Year 5 were at the design stage of their musical instrument project and made at least sound progress in lessons aimed at focusing them on resource and material considerations. Pupils have decided to make a range of instruments and begin to discover some of the potential difficulties. Teachers are well informed and supportive, while not taking away the decisions from the pupils. This is good practice. The weakness of the project is that it is not clear what specific skills are to be developed through it and how the work builds on earlier learning.
113. The lessons with pupils in Year 6 were very well planned and organised by the two teachers, working together. Pupils' designs relate very well to real fairground rides as a result of their visit to a fairground and very focused observation on construction. The pace of the project is very brisk without being rushed. The task was very well chosen to promote problem solving, practical skill development and collaborative working. Pupils were observed in the third afternoon lesson, further modifying their plans and working on the motorised part. They worked together in a very focused way and showed very good independent use of resources.
114. The practical skill level in cutting, drilling, use of glue gun and joint making is good and pupils use tools confidently and safely. Several groups had hit a problem in attaching the thin spindle of the motor to the (potentially) rotating part of the ride. Pupils displayed commendable perseverance and ingenuity in finding solutions. One group made substantial progress in using wheels of different sizes to add gearing to their construction. Pupils responded well to the approach of their teachers, recognising that they can ask but are expected to sort problems out for themselves if they can. This

is very good practice, based on very good classroom routines and relationships. There was a lot of very focussed and considered discussion and a lot of estimation and measurement. Literacy and numeracy skills and the skills of working together were promoted very well. Pupils achieved very well and their overall level of attainment is clearly above what is expected for their age. One of the pupils in Year 6 last year showed a keen insight into fitness for purpose when designing slippers for a teenage girl. She wrote; 'I have made it so if you charge down stairs your slipper will not fall off!'

## **GEOGRAPHY**

115. Standards at the age of seven and eleven are in line with national expectations. This represents a significant improvement since the time of the school's previous inspection. Pupils now make satisfactory progress. During the current inspection no lessons were seen in Years 1 and 2. Judgements are based, therefore, on discussions with pupils, together with a scrutiny of their work.
116. In Years 1 and 2, pupils successfully identify physical features of places, such as houses, roads, shops and the church. They undertake fieldwork in the local area, and pupils in Year 1 have successfully drawn simple maps of their journey to school. They also study a wider variety of maps, when they follow the travels of Bertie Bear. Pupils in Year 2 have drawn appropriate maps of the imaginary island of Struay, and have identified the places visited by Katie Morag. Most pupils correctly name the four countries of the United Kingdom. Pupils have studied a contrasting locality, in Mexico, and pupils confidently identify differences, for example, in housing, landscape and life-style. Pupils readily discuss the problems caused by waste, and they successfully identify the importance of re-cycling.
117. In Years 3 to 6, pupils are confident in identifying towns and countries on an appropriate range of maps, and they successfully place Crowborough on a map of England. Pupils in Year 4 have studied a contrasting location, in Chembakolli, in India, and they are confident in comparing features, such as jobs, climate and schools, with those found in Crowborough. Pupils in Year 3 readily discuss weather patterns, and they confidently compare the local weather with the climate in other parts of the world. Pupils in Year 5 successfully identify parts of a river system, such as the source and the mouth, and they confidently discuss the uses to which water is put. Pupils in Year 6 show a great concern for the environment, especially regarding the problems caused by traffic. They are most enthusiastic in suggesting ways in which improvements might be made, such as building a by-pass for the town.
118. The quality of teaching and learning are satisfactory overall, with some very good examples being observed in Year 4. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. Teachers have sound subject knowledge, provide clear learning objectives for pupils at the start of lessons and fully involve pupils through questioning. Overall, a most suitable range of work is provided, with, for example, a range of maps being successfully introduced to pupils. Geographical terminology is also emphasised, to help develop pupils' knowledge in this important area. Pupils find the subject interesting, they are generally well behaved when presented with their work, and they concentrate well on the tasks set. Just occasionally, a small number of pupils are slow in settling to their activities.
119. Overall, teachers provide pupils with a wide variety of learning opportunities, including undertaking fieldwork, and this enables them, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, to make satisfactory gains in their knowledge and skills. Where teaching is very good, the teacher provides particularly clear and helpful instruction, pupils are especially keen, expectations are high and pupils make very good progress during that lesson. Most pupils take considerable care with their work, and they make every effort to complete the tasks, for example, drawing maps and plans neatly and carefully. They also work well in groups, when discussing the questions they have been asked. Teachers mark pupils' work regularly, but do not add many written comments to add to the verbal advice they provide.
120. The school now uses national guidelines as its programme of work. Other planning is detailed, and this ensures that all appropriate work is covered. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. The co-ordinator is knowledgeable, and she supports her colleagues well. Through drawing up an action plan, she has played a significant part in tackling the issues raised in the last report. She does not yet have any opportunity to observe lessons taking place, although plans are in hand for this to happen. There are still no assessment procedures; there is little information, other than that gained through informal observations, on which to judge pupils' current attainment, or to provide appropriate future work.

121. The written work in geography, together with various measuring and counting activities, contributes towards the development of pupils' literacy and numeracy skills. The school is beginning to use information and communication technology to support the work in the subject. For example, pupils in Year 3 readily use computers to find information about world weather patterns. The study of a range of contrasting areas successfully helps to develop the pupils' cultural understanding.

## HISTORY

122. Standards in Years 2 and 6 broadly reflect what was reported at the last inspection in that most pupils achieve standards that are in line with national expectations. Pupils have positive attitudes to learning and show interest and curiosity in looking at the past. They are beginning to develop a sense of time and chronology, demonstrate knowledge of stories from the past beyond living memory and communicate their learning through talk, drawings and to a suitable extent, in their writing. They are also able to undertake simple enquiries into the past through their observations of local buildings and through the handling of domestic artefacts; for example, Year 2 pupils' visit to the local church linking with study of buildings in the past. Pupils in Year 1 were observed in a lesson, effectively enhancing their learning through the use of artefacts, such as old lanterns, candles and lamps of long ago. They successfully learnt to sort objects into their correct chronological order.
123. Most pupils' achievements in history across the school are satisfactory. This is largely due to the satisfactory quality of teaching and learning. The school has adopted national guidance in the subject and this ensures the systematic developments of the required skills in history across all year groups. Most teachers have a secure knowledge and understanding of the subject. They plan well and understand how to make history accessible to pupils of different age and ability, and use a range of resources well to engage their interest. They also use careful questioning and discussion to extend pupils' thinking and language. For example, a lively discussion and answers to suitable questions about the Celtic Queen Boudicca's rebellion inspired pupils in Year 3 to consider carefully different opinions and to extract correct information from the books and other resources to describe Boudicca's appearance. Pupils' enquiry skills in this lesson were further enhanced by the use of CD-ROMs to research for facts.
124. In Years 3 to 6, pupils communicate their knowledge of aspects of past societies, the invaders and settlers such as the Vikings and the Romans, and of the Ancient Egyptians and the Greeks, through their well-constructed time-lines, descriptive writing and drawings. Many pupils successfully apply the subject-specific vocabulary in their writing. Pupils are sufficiently skilled in using and interpreting a wide range of historical sources and evidence. This is an improvement from the last report. Most pupils develop their sense of chronology through the use of timelines and describe similarities and differences between life today and life in the past. Pupils' completed work indicates that most have some knowledge of the periods of British history. Year 5 learn about the customs and way of life of the Ancient Egyptians and the archaeologist's discovery of the artefacts. Pupils are beginning to think more clearly about everyday lives of ordinary people and compare and contrast what they discover with their own lives in the present day. Many confidently ask questions from the past in order to develop their historical enquiry.
125. Some of the work in history linked with art is impressive, for example the sketches of Greek vases and urns. Literacy skills are well promoted through writing of accounts, for example, the life and work of Grace Darling by Year 2 pupils.
126. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. Where teaching is good, pupils build upon their previous learning and, as in Year 1, strategies and resources are used effectively to extend their thinking. Good questioning by the teacher at the start of the lesson provides clear links with previous learning and consolidates pupils' understanding. However, the impact of teaching is sometimes weakened when pupils of different abilities in the same class often do the same task. This results in a lack of challenge for the higher attaining pupils in particular. There are also difficulties when lessons are scheduled for long periods of time and last for the whole of the afternoon in some classes. Teachers in these lessons find it difficult to maintain a brisk pace and sustain pupils' concentration over such a length. For example, in one such lesson, Year 5 pupils' pace of work suffered and they became less productive in the task.
127. The co-ordinator has a clear vision for the development of the subject but her monitoring role in evaluating teaching and learning in the subject is not yet developed. There are no procedures to

support teachers' assessment of pupils' progress and therefore assessment is not being used to inform planning.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)**

128. At the time of the last inspection it was judged that pupils' attainment in information technology at seven and eleven was satisfactory and, in a few cases, better than the national expectation. Since then, national expectations of pupils' attainment across the new ICT curriculum have been raised. Few lessons were timetabled during the period of the inspection but on the evidence of those observed, conversations with pupils and teachers and examination of the portfolio of work carried out earlier, pupils' levels of attainment at seven and eleven are below the revised national expectations overall. There are, however, a few examples of pupils' work that indicate at least an average level of attainment.
129. The school has correctly identified the need to improve further the provision for teaching the subject on three fronts. First, sharing existing good practice in the school by making the best possible use of the three computers available to most year groups. Second, developing the use of ICT resources in supporting and extending learning across the curriculum. Third, increasing the stock of up to date computers with appropriate software. A further need is for continued staff training so that pupils have regular opportunities to build progressively on their skills in each aspect of the subject.
130. During the inspection, a lesson and its planned follow-up for pupils in Year 1, provided a good example of the effective use of limited time and resources. The teacher used an appropriate word bank and enabled pupils to extend their use and understanding well. This was achieved through very good planning, including the preparation of a large chart showing what was on the computer screen, and very good focused questioning and involvement of pupils as demonstrators. Pupils were helped to build on their earlier learning of finding words related to light sources from an alphabetical list. The learning in this lesson was consolidated well during the rest of the week when pupils worked in pairs with parent helpers. In the lesson, pupils demonstrated a sound knowledge of, for example, the use of a mouse and the arrow keys when navigating a menu and how to scroll a screen.
131. Examination of a small sample of work from last year shows that pupils in Years 1 and 2 built successfully in some respects on their experiences in the reception classes. For example, pupils in Year 1 had created designs for their Christmas books and printed labels for their artwork. Pupils in Year 2 advanced their word processing skills when they added punctuation to their writing. During the inspection pupils from Year 2 showed good skills in selecting appropriate fonts and size, importing graphics and layout when they prepared instruction sheets on 'How to make a tile'.
132. Pupils in Year 3 benefited from clear instruction on how to insert a picture from a clip art gallery into text and other ways to improve the appearance of their work. Following the lesson pupils worked in pairs at the two computers in the classroom, taking advantage of wet breaks and lunchtimes as well as time allocated in lessons. They talked confidently about their choices of font and demonstrated clearly that they had understood and could apply what they had been taught. They were helped in their learning by the teacher's good organisation and provision of printed guidance to follow up the lesson and ease of access to computers to reinforce their learning.
133. Examples of work from last year show that pupils have experienced aspects of the curriculum in ICT in each year group. Pupils in Year 3, for example, have successfully searched the web to find information about the weather and used a spreadsheet to produce a graph of dinner numbers. Pupils in Year 4 displayed weather records graphically, used logo and explored a branching database. Year 5 pupils developed their use of spreadsheets and learned to draw, move and re-size a graphic. Pupils in Year 6 imported pictures when designing Christmas invitations. Much of this work is of a satisfactory standard. What has been missing is the planning and practice to enable pupils to build progressively on their skills, knowledge and understanding in the subject, from year group to year group.
134. Although the use of ICT skills to improve learning in other subjects has been rightly identified as a key area for development, there were examples during the inspection of its use in literacy, mathematics, geography, history and science.



## MUSIC

135. The attainment of pupils by the age of seven and by the age of eleven is in line with national expectations for their age, as it was at the last inspection. Pupils make good progress in lessons, due to improved teaching. This represents good achievement, since progress was satisfactory at the last inspection. By the age of seven, pupils select and explore percussion instruments, use sounds to create musical effects and sustain a simple repeated rhythm. An awareness of pitch and pulse is developing and pupils recognise changes in dynamics. They learn to discriminate between high and low sounds and to create simple melodic patterns. Pupils make sounds of different duration on pitched and unpitched percussion instruments. In their performance, they demonstrate a developing understanding of dynamics and volume and an awareness of audience. They create simple melodic patterns and use changes in pitch expressively to respond to the stimulus of stories. Pupils develop confidence in communicating their musical ideas to others. They listen to music from different times and places, for example, Handel's Hallelujah Chorus in assembly.
136. By the age of eleven, pupils show a developing ability to use sound descriptively and expressively, to achieve an intended effect. They sing with clear diction and a sense of phrase and musical expression, for example, they successfully sing a round, keeping in time and in tune with others. Pupils respond to structure in music through movement and dance. They develop an understanding of the process of composing by creating and performing music in response to musical and non-musical stimuli.
137. During ten sessions at the local secondary school, older pupils were taught about the Javanese gamelan and the type of music that they would be playing. They developed puppetry skills through designing and making their own shadow puppets, created and narrated their own stories and learned basic Javanese dance techniques. The project raised their cultural awareness and encouraged the development of teamwork and communication skills. It also encouraged aural awareness, as the music was learned without notation. Pupils show developing maturity, and an appreciation of the ideas and performance of others, in evaluating their own composition and performance and those of others.
138. Teaching is good, overall. In the four lessons observed in Years 1 and 2, teaching ranged from satisfactory to excellent. In a lesson observed in Year 5, teaching was very good. This represents an improvement since the last inspection. Teaching which is good or better is characterised by detailed planning, which contains clear objectives that are understood by pupils. As a result, they are interested and motivated and apply intellectual and creative effort in their compositions and performances. Teachers show good knowledge and understanding. Basic skills are taught well. Pupils enjoy music and develop their knowledge, understanding and skills. Teachers' high expectations of effort and behaviour, and the very good relationships that prevail, promote good learning. The teaching methods used are effective; good questioning skills and encouragement ensure the involvement of all pupils and lead to good achievement. Pupils with special educational needs are supported very well during music lessons. They make good progress, like their peers. There is appropriate challenge for pupils, enabling them to develop their skills further. Teachers manage pupils very well and create a positive climate for learning. Time and resources are used well and learning is maintained for the full time available. The quality and use of ongoing assessment are good. Self-assessment by pupils is encouraged, enabling them to develop a good knowledge of their own learning.
139. The quality and range of learning opportunities are good. The breadth, balance and relevance of the enriched curriculum are good. Provision for pupils with special needs is very good, due to additional support. Listening to music from other countries enhances pupils' cultural development. Many teachers give freely of their lunch hour to support pupils' musical development. About 40 children attend the school choir, which meets at lunchtime. The orchestra and three recorder groups also meet at lunchtime. Nearly 30 children benefit from the opportunities provided for learning the violin, cello and clarinet. Many pupils develop their skills further, through attendance at the local music centre on Saturdays. During the year, the school participates in the Primary Schools' Christmas Concert, the Infant Music Festival, the Junior Music Festival and the Recorder Festival. Musical performances within the school include a nativity, end of year plays, class assemblies and a music concert for parents. Recent performances by outside groups have included a drum workshop and a string quartet.

140. A gifted subject leader, who provides clear educational direction and good support for colleagues, leads the subject very well. The programme of work is comprehensive and ensures that pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding build progressively from year to year. The draft procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are good and will be used to inform curriculum planning. An adequate range of resources supports the programme of work. There is a good range of new instruments from a wide range of different cultures.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

141. The standards attained by Year 2 pupils in gymnastics are similar to those seen in most schools. By Year 6 the standard seen in games skills are better than typically seen at that age. Standards in swimming throughout the school are very high.
142. The school uses national subject guidelines to support planning and to ensure that statutory requirements are fully met, for pupils in Years 1 and 2 and Years 3 and 6.
143. The physical education programme is enriched by a very wide range of activities outside school hours, by strong links with Beacon Sports College and programmes of coaching provided by organizations such as Sussex Cricket Club, and local tennis and rugby clubs.
144. The school has its own swimming pool where, because of the high quality of teaching, all pupils, including the youngest in the school, are given a very good start. Older pupils continue their swimming lessons at the Beacon Sports College where the facilities are better suited to the more challenging water safety and life saving skills that they learn. The school participates in many competitive tournaments and had the most pupils nationally in Years 5 and 6 to achieve 100m in swimming. The school is the current holder of trophies for winning the local schools' soccer league and tournament and the schools' cross-country competition. Dance and gymnastics festivals also feature in the annual calendar and there is a mixed soccer team. Talented pupils are encouraged to participate in school clubs and teams. Parents are given information also about outside agencies and clubs where special skills can be nurtured.
145. The quality of teaching and learning in the lessons seen is satisfactory overall, though teaching was good in the Year 5 gymnastics lessons because of the challenging activity. Pupils worked well with a partner to practise and perfect a sequence of balances. As the lesson progressed there was noticeable improvement in pupils' ability to create imaginative sequences and hold stillness in a balance. Year 6 pupils demonstrated good understanding of attack and defence skills during their games lesson. They used space tactically, received the ball confidently and showed good accuracy with their passing. In some lessons teaching was less effective because there was no clear objective as to which skills were to be developed. Teachers missed opportunities to coach pupils to improve their skills and in some gymnastics lessons too little thought was given to how pupils could link balances and movement to perform more fluent sequences.
146. The co-ordinator provides good leadership and manages the subject well. The range of opportunities provided and the sharing of resources and expertise with Beacon Sports College have helped to maintain standards since the last inspection. The school is currently seeking the 'Activemark Gold' award and to that end is beginning to increase the extra curriculum provision for pupils in Years 1 and 2. The need for staff training is featured in the development plan. This is particularly appropriate for the teaching of gymnastics in order to improve the way in which apparatus is used to help pupils develop skills.