

## ERRATUM

Please substitute the following paragraphs:

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

The school was last inspected in 1996 when areas for development were identified as: maintaining the good ethos of learning; providing sufficient non-teaching time for the headteacher to manage the school effectively; raising standards in information and communication technology, physical education and design and technology; increasing the amount of educational resources available, and establishing a long term plan that reflects the aims of the school. Following the last inspection action was taken to address these issues including the conversion of two classrooms to form a school hall to enable indoor physical education to take place. However, the school suffered a period of some turbulence with low staff morale and much staff discontinuity which hampered improvements in standards at the school. From Easter 2000 and following the appointment of the new headteacher and a completely new teaching staff, improvement has been rapid and the school has changed almost out of all recognition. The provision of the school hall and the wider range of sporting activities, both in and out of school, has raised standards considerably in physical education. The new headteacher now teaches only two days a week and has established a rigorous routine of classroom observation and monitoring and evaluation of provision. There has been some considerable increase in the amount of resources available but, owing to the previous lack of resources for information and communication technology, the subject is only now beginning to be developed throughout the school so that standards are rising rapidly. Standards in design and technology are still below the national expectation at both key stages, because the subject is only now being re-established in line with new National Curriculum requirements. The school improvement plan has been completely revised, along with a new Mission Statement, which supports and maintains the good ethos of the school. Overall, there has been good improvement since the previous inspection.

#### Also:

5. Standards in information and communication technology are broadly in line with the national expectation at the end of Key Stage 1. Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 is below the national expectation, although there has been a rapid improvement since last Easter. This is because until the appointment of the new headteacher, less emphasis was placed on the importance of information and communication technology in the classroom and the computers available were in need of some upgrading or replacement. Hence pupils at Key Stage 2 have had little to build upon and it will take time before the skills being learned in Key Stage 1 percolate through to the junior class.
  
17. The quality of teaching in information and communication technology is satisfactory in both key stages, with pupils achieving increasingly well over the last year. This is because, before the coming of the new headteacher, computing was not fully established in classroom teaching so that pupils and teachers have little to build upon in Key Stage 2. However, since last Easter, there has been a good improvement in the number of computers available, and the subject is developing well, with pupils acquiring new knowledge and learning at a rapid rate. At Key Stage 1, teachers' explanations are so effective that, by the end of a lesson, all pupils understand that electronic mail usually requires a computer, a telephone and a modem. Pupils use their information and communication technology skills to support their learning in mathematics, music, art and literacy. Their skills in data handling are being progressively developed through teachers' carefully structured approach. As teachers' expertise improves, they convey their enthusiasm well to pupils to engage and sustain their interest.

## INSPECTION REPORT

### **FORDCOMBE CE (AIDED) PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Fordcombe, Tunbridge Wells

LEA area: Kent

Unique reference number: 118719

Headteacher: Mr R Dungate

Reporting inspector: Mrs S Halley  
8203

Dates of inspection: 26 - 28 February 2001

Inspection number: 194822

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and junior

School category: Voluntary aided

Age range of pupils: 4 - 11 years

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Fordcombe  
Tunbridge Wells  
Kent

Postcode: TN3 0RY

Telephone number: 01892 740224

Fax number: 01892 740224

Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mr M Gilbert

Date of previous inspection: 18 March 1996

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
8203	Shelagh Halley	Registered inspector	Mathematics Science Information and communications technology Design technology Art Foundation stage	What sort of school is it? The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils taught?
13807	Chris Haggerty	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents? Staffing, Accommodation and Learning Resources
8056	Howard Probert	Team inspector	Equal opportunities Special educational needs English Geography History Music Physical education	How good are curricular and other opportunities? How well is the school led and managed?

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Fordcombe Church of England (Aided) School is situated in the small village of Fordcombe, just outside Tunbridge Wells in Kent. There are 80 pupils on roll, 50 boys and 30 girls, aged from 4 to 11. This is smaller than most other primary schools. At the time of the inspection, there were 5 children under the age of 5 in the foundation stage. There are no pupils from refugee or travelling families, and none from ethnic minorities, nor are there any pupils with English as an additional language. The school's register of special educational needs numbers 17, a proportion which is broadly in line with the national average. There are no statements of special educational need, although one is pending, and this is lower than the national average. The needs covered include dyslexia, physical disability and autism. Children enter the reception class with a broad range of abilities which are approximately in line with the county average. This school was the subject of an in-depth inspection of its provision for pupils with special educational needs.

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

Taking into account the rapidly improving standards of attainment, the overall good quality of teaching, and the good leadership and management, the school is increasingly effective and gives good value for money.

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

- The good teaching which leads to improving standards of attainment at the age of eleven in the core subjects of English, mathematics and especially science
- Pupils' very good attitudes, behaviour and personal development
- The good care taken of pupils
- The good leadership and management of the headteacher, his staff and the governing body
- The remarkable improvement in provision over the last year
- The very good quality of its communications with parents

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

- Standards of handwriting and presentation in Key Stage 1
- Standards in information and communication technology, design and technology and art are below expectations through the lack of provision and resources
- Accommodation, so that pupils can be taught in more appropriate year settings and improve their standards of attainment and progress
- Further training for those involved in the teaching pupils with special educational needs

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

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

The school was last inspected in 1996 when areas for development were identified as: maintaining the good ethos of learning; providing sufficient non-teaching time for the headteacher to manage the school effectively; raising standards in information and communication technology, physical education and design and technology; increasing the amount of educational resources available, and establishing a long term plan that reflects the aims of the school. Following a period of some turbulence due to low staff morale and much staff discontinuity, the appointment of the new headteacher means that the school has changed almost out of recognition. Little action was taken following the previous inspection until the new appointment was made and, since last Easter, improvement has been rapid. Accommodation has improved and there is a completely new teaching staff. The provision of a new classroom, freeing the hall for other purposes, and a wider range of sporting activities, both in and out of school, has raised standards considerably in physical education. The new headteacher now teaches only two days a week and has established a rigorous routine of classroom observation and monitoring and evaluation of provision. There has been some considerable increase in the amount of resources available but, owing to the previous lack of resources for information and communication technology, the subject is only now beginning to be developed throughout the school so that standards are rising rapidly.

Standards in design and technology are still below the national expectation at both key stages, because the subject is only now being re-established in line with new National Curriculum requirements. The school improvement plan has been completely revised, along with a new Mission Statement, which supports and maintains the good ethos of the school. Overall, there has been good improvement since the previous inspection.

## STANDARDS

Where the class taking the national assessment tests numbers fewer than ten, comparative figures are not published in this report. This is because the numbers are so small that no reliable conclusion can be drawn from them since pupils' attainment fluctuates so much from year to year. However, the school met the challenging targets it set for itself, based on the prior attainment of the pupils in the cohort. In the work seen during the inspection, standards of attainment at the age of seven were broadly in line with the national expectation in English and mathematics, and above it in science. At the age of eleven, standards in English and science were above the national expectation and broadly in line in mathematics. There are particular strengths in speaking and listening, reading, mathematical and scientific investigations at both key stages. Pupils of all abilities work at appropriate tasks which help them to achieve their best work. Children in the foundation stage are likely to meet the national early learning goals by the end of the reception year.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils enjoy coming to school and tackle their work with enthusiasm.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Pupils conduct themselves well in all areas of the school.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Pupils are learning to take initiative and responsibility. They form constructive relationships, based on the good models set for them by their teachers and other adults in the school.
Attendance	Good. Pupils are generally punctual and lessons begin and end on time.

After a period of turbulence following the previous inspection, when standards and expectations were allowed to slide, pupils now take pride in belonging to Fordcombe, and work well with each other, respecting and valuing the opinions of others. Their generally good behaviour contributes to the quality of their learning.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The overall standard of teaching in English and mathematics in both key stages is good. Teachers plan their lessons according to the national literacy and numeracy strategies and take care to adapt the work they set to the individual needs of their pupils so that they make good progress. A particular strength in teaching is the very good management of pupils by teachers which ensures that classrooms are good environments in which effective learning can take place. However, there is scope to improve the



teaching of handwriting in Key Stage 1. Ongoing assessment and marking are generally good and help pupils to improve their work. Pupils with special educational needs receive good support and make good progress towards the targets in their individual education plans. Pupils with prior higher attainment are suitably challenged and encouraged to achieve their best. Teaching was very good in 25 per cent of the lessons seen, good in 51 per cent and satisfactory in the remaining 24 per cent. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen. Children under five in the foundation stage are well taught and make good progress towards the national early learning goals.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The school provides a good range of learning opportunities with a broad and balanced curriculum, enhanced by a wide variety of extra-curricular activities.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Needs are identified early and good support is provided. Although there is no formal identification of gifted and talented pupils, the needs of the more able are generally well addressed.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good overall. Provision for spiritual development is good. Pupils' moral and social development are very good. While cultural development is satisfactory, there is scope for further opportunities to study other religions and cultures in Britain.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The care which the school provides for its pupils is good. Procedures for monitoring pupils' attainment and progress, personal development and behaviour are good. There is scope for improving the procedure for monitoring pupils' punctuality.

Although several subjects are in the process of being re-established according to the requirements of the new National Curriculum, all schemes of work are in place and the curriculum is enriched by a range of extra-curricular activities which is more varied than in most other schools of this kind. Parents work very well with the school to support pupils' learning. Procedures for child protection are well understood and implemented by all members of staff, teaching and non-teaching. However, there is a need for further training in the awareness of child protection issues.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The new headteacher, ably supported by his hard-working and effective staff, and the committed governing body, provides good leadership and management. In less than a year, he has identified all the areas for development and has effected many changes for the better in provision and the quality of teaching.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors fulfil their responsibilities well. The new initiatives established by the new headteacher have been achieved with the governors' enthusiastic support.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. Priorities are appropriately identified and there is a strong commitment to improve and a good capacity to succeed.
The strategic use of resources	Good. The governing body make good use of all available resources.

The school has an adequate number of teachers, who are well supported by a small team of experienced classroom assistants. Accommodation, though much improved since the previous inspection, is only just adequate. The circumstances of each of the three classes catering for three differing age ranges are unsatisfactory, and impacts negatively on the standards of attainment and progress. Although resources are generally adequate, there is a need for more resources for the literacy hour, and artefacts for geography, history and religious education. The library provision is good, although it is class-based, but there is a need for a review of the existing stock, some of which is outdated and unattractive. With the coming of the new headteacher, the governors have increased their involvement in the life of the school and are becoming more aware of its strengths and weaknesses, working well to overcome the latter. They make prudent financial decisions and carefully apply the principles of best value when making large purchases or hiring expensive services.

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

<b>What pleases parents most</b>	<b>What parents would like to see improved</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Their children like school.</li> <li>• They would feel comfortable about approaching the school with problems.</li> <li>• The school expects their children to work hard and achieve their best.</li> <li>• The school is well led and managed.</li> <li>• The school is helping their children to become mature and responsible.</li> <li>• Their children are making good progress in school.</li> <li>• The teaching is good.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No significant points.</li> </ul>

Inspectors agree with parents' very positive views.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. The numbers of pupils taking the national assessment tests at the ages of seven and eleven are below ten, and therefore too small to allow any reliable conclusions to be drawn from the results.
2. In the work seen during the inspection, standards of attainment in English were broadly in line with the national expectation at the end of Key Stage 1 and above at the end of Key Stage 2. Standards in speaking and listening are particularly good, at both key stages. Standards in reading and writing are below the national expectation at seven and broadly in line at the age of eleven. However, standards of handwriting and presentation are below the expectation at the end of Key Stage 1. This is because of the small numbers involved and the relative weaknesses in the teaching of basic skills, for example, handwriting and presentation. Literacy skills are used effectively in a range of other subjects and activities in the curriculum, for example, geography, history and science.
3. In mathematics, standards are broadly in line with the national expectation at the end of both key stages. Although standards declined following the previous inspection, the improvement over the past year has been rapid. A particular strength is the number of opportunities offered for mathematical investigation and problem-solving covering areas such as pattern-seeking, shapes and symmetry, number and money, and probability and ratio. There was less evidence of data handling, especially through the use of computers, but this is in the planning for the summer term. Numeracy skills are used effectively in subjects like geography, history and science. This is, however, under-developed in design and technology.
4. Standards in science are above the national expectation at the ends of both key stages, because of the many opportunities given to pupils to make their own scientific enquiries and investigations. Pupils at Key Stage 1 have a clear knowledge and understanding of materials and their uses and what happens when they are changed; for instance, when melting an ice-cube or making a jelly. At the end of Key Stage 2, the majority of pupils are confident in their understanding and correct use of associated technical language when discussing the characteristics of living things, and they have a good understanding of forces, including friction and gravity.
5. Standards in information and communication technology are broadly in line with the national expectation at the end of Key Stage 1. Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 is below the national expectation, although there has been a rapid improvement since last Easter. This is because, until the new appointment of the headteacher was made, there were no computers in classrooms and so pupils at Key Stage 1 have had little to build upon and it will take time before the skills being learned in Key Stage 1 percolate through to the junior class.
6. There was insufficient evidence to make a secure judgement about attainment in geography. Standards in design and technology are below the national expectation at the end of both key stages. Attainment in physical education is in line with the national expectation at the end of Key Stage 1 and above at the end of Key Stage 2. Standards in music and history are broadly in line with the national expectation. In art, standards of attainment are below the national expectation.
7. Children in the foundation stage are likely to exceed the national early learning goals in personal and social development, mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world, and physical development. They are likely to meet the early learning goals in communication, language and literacy and in creative development.

### **PUPILS' ATTITUDES, VALUES AND PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT**

8. Pupils' attitudes, personal development and relationships are very good. Their behaviour and attendance are good.
9. All pupils have very good attitudes to learning. Pupils learn well, when lessons are well planned with a clear structure. For example, during the numeracy hour pupils in a mixed age class were keen to offer suggestions about the number 28, the last day of the month. Pupils from both year groups contributed ideas, which encouraged their thinking skills and made learning numbers fun. Children under five listened attentively and followed instructions, concentrating well when engaged in group activities such as making the pieces of fruit from play-dough to match the number on the flash card. Pupils in Key Stage 2 explained that the group activities in lessons were much more interesting now and pupils work harder in lessons. They also behave better. The group activities in lessons at both key stages are challenging and interesting. This has a positive effect on pupils' progress and attainment. Pupils are keen to ask and answer questions, they respond well to staff who use good prompts which are well targeted to the different age and ability groups, ensuring that all pupils take an active role in lessons. This contributes positively to the standards achieved. All parents who completed the questionnaire report that their child is happy to come to school.
10. Overall the behaviour of pupils is good. This has a positive effect on learning and the standards achieved. Behaviour at lunchtime is good; pupils sit in friendship groups within their year groups and enjoy a pleasant, social occasion. They play well together during breaks, although there can on occasion be some boisterous behaviour. Pupils show good self-discipline by their good behaviour when moving around the school, quietly going to assembly or queuing for lunch. Pupils show respect for the grounds, the buildings and the furniture; there is no sign of graffiti or vandalism. The behaviour of pupils in assembly is very good and in the classroom pupils work well in pairs and in groups, co-operating with each other. The staff has high expectations of behaviour and pupils respond to this. Pupils report that bullying is not an issue and there was no evidence of bullying during the week of the inspection. Parents who completed the parents' questionnaire and attended the parents' meeting report that the behaviour of pupils has improved and is good and that the school provides a happy environment.
11. Pupils take full advantage of the many opportunities that the school offers for personal development; personal development and relationships are very good. For example, during the lunch hour five Year 6 pupils were carefully working out a dance routine to present to the over-sixties club. Key Stage 2 pupils organise the eco-committee, producing an agenda and recording the minutes efficiently. During a committee meeting one pupil wrote members' suggestions on a flip chart, ready for the occasion when all pupils vote individually. The results are then discussed and acted on by the committee - for example, currently they are preparing an action plan for recycling in the school. Pupils are fully involved in the daily routines of the school; they take the registers to the office and also provide music for assemblies. They are also busily involved in fund-raising for the school and the local church as well as national charities, which gives them an awareness of the outside world and enhances their personal development. The relationships between pupils and between staff and pupils are very good. Staff act as good role models; they speak to pupils with respect and pupils respond to this. Pupils are polite and welcoming to visitors, they are keen to talk about the school and to show their work. In lessons, pupils are keen to contribute answers, confident that their view would be listened to. This was particularly evident during an assembly when pupils were not afraid to speak up with their own ideas. The very good relationships contribute positively to the standards achieved.
12. Overall the attendance of pupils is good. It is well above the national average and the unauthorised absence is well below the national average. There are some pupils taking holidays in term time, but the school provides parents with the dates when the statutory attainment tests are taking place to ensure that pupils do not go on holiday during this period. There is some minor lateness that is recorded in registers but there is no late book. Registers meet legal requirements and registration is carried out quickly and efficiently.

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

13. The overall quality of teaching and learning throughout the school is good. In over three-quarters of the lessons seen, it was good or very good and in the rest it was satisfactory. No unsatisfactory

teaching was observed. The consistently good teaching is even more to be commended because teachers have to cope with three age ranges in each class, which renders planning work for differing ages and abilities rather burdensome. Teachers generally do this well, and ensure that the work they set is suited to the individual needs of pupils, so that they make satisfactory progress overall in the foundation stage and Key Stage 1, and good progress in Key Stage 2.

14. Teaching in English is good overall but there are some variations in some lessons because of the three age groups involved, where teachers are challenged to meet the needs of all pupils. This means that, in the later years of Key Stage 1, teachers put insufficient emphasis on the correct formation of letters and on good standards of handwriting and presentation. Teachers make effective choices of books and activities and, as a result, pupils of all ages are enthusiastic about the texts they read in the literacy hour, developing a love of books and reading. Teachers offer good additional support to pupils at both ends of the range of learning, with worksheets adapted for those with special educational needs, and extended challenge for the more able - for instance, when looking for archaic language in poems such as 'Sir Patrick Spens.' This helps pupils of all abilities to achieve well. Support staff and volunteer helpers, including governors, are well briefed and make a very positive contribution to the quality of learning. Lessons are well planned and based effectively on the national literacy strategy, suitably adapted to meet the needs of pupils. Throughout the school teachers conscientiously assess the work pupils do and how well they are learning but they do not always use their assessments to adjust their planning. In Key Stage 1, teachers do not always ensure that the correct size and spacing in writing is practised and emphasised.
15. The teaching of mathematics is good overall and teachers have successfully adapted the national numeracy strategy to the needs of their pupils. Teachers make good use of art skills to reinforce learning in mathematics - for example, when pupils paint 'butterfly' pictures to demonstrate symmetry or paint repeating patterns. Teachers use very effective questioning to allow pupils to explore and understand the work they are doing, giving reasonable explanations of how they arrive at the answer. Teachers use the beginning and end of numeracy hours to provide good opportunities for developing literacy skills in the form of correct mathematical vocabulary, for example, factors and multiples. In Key Stage 1, however, although there is good development in pupils' recording of mathematical problems, the teachers do not always correct badly-written figures. In Key Stage 2, previous work is progressively built upon and pupils make effective use of a variety of strategies to solve problems set by their teachers; for instance, using their mathematical knowledge and understanding to construct story equations. The use of information and communication technology is developing well. Teachers' planning also includes appropriate assessment opportunities so that the teachers have a good knowledge of what pupils know, can do and understand. Assessment procedures are good but are too new to have had significant impact on target-setting for individual pupils and consequently, their attainment and progress.
16. In science, the quality of teaching is good overall and often very good with a clear emphasis placed on investigative and experimental work which enhances pupils' knowledge and understanding so that pupils of all abilities make satisfactory progress. Teachers' good questioning techniques in directing enquiries to pupils of differing abilities make a significant contribution to the development of literacy skills in the subject. Teachers provide good links with art when pupils are asked to make close observational drawings of the seeds in various fruits and vegetables. Homework tasks are set with the object of reinforcing learning in the classroom; for example, naming the parts of a plant when working on the growth of seeds in fruits and vegetables. Planning is appropriately based on national guidance and work is in progress on producing a systematic scheme of work to cover all three key stages.
17. The quality of teaching and in information and communication technology is satisfactory in both key stages, with pupils achieving increasingly well over the last year. This is because there were too few resources to teach the subject properly until the coming of the new headteacher, so that pupils and teachers have little to build on in Key Stage 2. However, since last Easter, there has been a good improvement in the number of computers available, and the subject is developing well, with pupils acquiring new knowledge and learning at a rapid rate. . At Key Stage 1, teachers' explanations are so effective that, by the end of a lesson, all pupils understand that electronic

mail usually requires a computer, a telephone and a modem. Pupils use their information and communication technology skills to support their learning in mathematics, music, art and literacy. Their skills in data handling are being progressively developed through teachers' carefully structured approach. As teachers' expertise improves, they convey their enthusiasm well to pupils to engage and sustain their interest.

18. The quality of teaching in music is good overall, and very good in Key Stage 1. Here, pupils sing competently and tunefully, and use a range of percussion instruments to demonstrate loud and soft sounds. They carried out their activities with enthusiasm and enjoyment, responding to the visiting specialist teacher's enthusiasm. At Key Stage 2, pupils also respond well to the activities planned by their teachers, working well with partners to replicate the sound patterns made in a listening game. Teaching in physical education is satisfactory in Key Stage 1, and good in Key Stage 2. At Key Stage 1, the lessons sometimes lack pace and opportunities are lost to use the older pupils to demonstrate their skills to the children in the foundation stage. At Key Stage 2, the teacher had a good understanding of the basic skills and managed pupils, including those with special educational needs and the more able, very well so that they all made good progress. There was insufficient evidence to make a reliable judgement on the quality of teaching and learning in art, design and technology, or geography. The quality of teaching in history is good overall, being satisfactory at Key Stage 1 and good at Key Stage 2.
19. The teaching of children under five is good and, because the difficulties caused by planning mean that they often do the same work as the older children in the class, ensures good progress towards meeting, and sometimes exceeding, the requirements of the nationally expected early learning goals.

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

20. The quality and range of learning opportunities provided by the school are good. The school's curriculum is broad, well balanced and meets the legal requirements of the National Curriculum. Religious education is based upon diocesan guidelines and the festivals of the Christian church and meets legal requirements. The provision made for pupils' personal, social and health education is good. For example, good use is made of circle time and during the inspection Key Stage 2 pupils were participating in a personal, social and health education lunchtime club which is regularly led by a school governor. In addition to the opportunities provided for their personal development they were preparing a song and dance routine for presentation to the local over-sixties club. This provision contributes significantly to the very good attitudes and behaviour observed in the school. Sex education and education in drugs awareness are effectively included in the curriculum. The school promotes equal opportunities effectively and this ensures that all pupils have equal access to the curriculum. All staff are very receptive to the idea of inclusion, and the ethos of the school and relationships between pupils are prime factors in their success.
21. The curriculum for the under fives and Key Stage 1 is satisfactory. It is well planned and directed to the implementation of the early learning goals for the under fives. The accommodation allocated to this class does limit the range of opportunities offered to the pupils and it is at present necessary to use the school hall for some of the more practical aspects of the curriculum.
22. There is good provision for the teaching of literacy and numeracy skills through the literacy and numeracy hours. These developments are having a positive impact on the raising of standards and have enabled the school to meet its set targets.
23. Curriculum planning has improved since the last inspection. All subjects now have clear guidelines to support teachers' curricular planning. The quality of the teachers' medium and short term planning is satisfactory in the under fives and Year 1 and good at Key Stage 2. Teachers generally work effectively to differentiate their questions and tasks to meet the needs of pupils of different ages and abilities in their classes and this has a good effect upon the learning for all

pupils, including those with special educational needs. However, this does not always happen in Key Stage 1, and so pupils occasionally achieve less than they should.

24. The provision for extra-curricular activities is good and pupils are offered a wide range of opportunities during the school day as well as outside the curriculum. The school participates in an extensive inter-school fixture list and tournaments including football, netball and cross-country. There are also opportunities for computer clubs, gardening and the decision to participate in the 'eco-school' project makes an important contribution to the pupils' perceptions of citizenship and environmental education and science. There is also a school choir and recorder groups.
25. The school has fostered good links with the church and local groups. Pupils sing carols around the village tree at Christmas. Elderly parishioners watch the school nativity play with enjoyment. Pupils also entertain the over-sixties club. Links are made with the local secondary schools and visiting staff meet Year 6 pupils before they transfer to their new schools.
26. The school's provision for moral and social development is very good, its provision for spiritual development is good and cultural development is satisfactory.
27. Spiritual development is promoted effectively through assemblies, daily acts of collective worship, religious education and through class discussions. Pupils are given plenty of opportunities to reflect on prayer and gain an insight and an understanding of Christian beliefs and traditions. For example, during all assemblies a candle is lit by one of the pupils to foster a sense of reflection and prayer and to help concentrate pupils' thinking and to encourage them to reflect further on the theme of the week. In one assembly during the inspection the school recited the prayer of St Richard of Chichester by heart and the pupils sang 'My peace I give unto you...' thoughtfully with expression and meaning. In all the assemblies observed pupils were highly involved in activities, singing and reflection, and answering questions. There were moments of awe and wonder as they sat quietly and reflected on the theme of love. Pupils have many opportunities across the curriculum to discuss and consider personal experiences and explore relationships with others. Appropriate opportunities also exist across the curriculum in order to promote pupils' spiritual development - for example, in the study of the natural world in science and through music, drama and stories.
28. The provision for pupils' moral development is underpinned by the school's caring and supportive ethos. The school has a very effective code of conduct based upon a well written behaviour policy. Adults throughout the school provide good role models and great care is taken to promote positive relationships within the school community. This helps to create a calm, caring and secure learning environment in which pupils develop very good attitudes which ensures that they respond to school activities with confidence and happiness. Staff also reward good work, effort and behaviour appropriately which supports moral development. One assembly during the inspection was in part devoted to awards to pupils for their achievements in a range of activities including behaviour. Parents are very supportive of the school's approach and believe it promotes high standards.
29. The provision for pupils' social development is a major factor in the very good relationships found among and between adults and pupils. Pupils are given very good opportunities to work successfully as individuals, in pairs and as members of a group. For example, in Years 4, 5 and 6 they collaborated well to prepare class presentations of poems in the literacy hour. Older pupils have a range of jobs that contribute positively to the life of the school. For example, they prepare for assemblies and manage the overhead projector during assemblies as well as lighting the candle and other related tasks. In each class pupils develop co-operative skills through group work and show that they are able to listen to and respect the views of others in many subjects across the curriculum. Planned visits to places of interest, for example, Lullingstone Villa, Hever Castle and Penshurst Place and a residential visit to Mallydam Environment Centre, all contribute effectively to pupils' social development.
30. Pupils have occasional opportunities to experience visits from Bozo and Zizi Theatre Group and to work with professional artists, poets and musicians in workshop activities. The school organises a

wide variety of educational visits to places of historical interest. In religious education pupils are introduced to a variety of faiths and cultures and Fordcombe Fred' visits different countries, currently India. However, pupils are not provided with first-hand experiences of our multi-cultural society. For example, teachers do not organise visits to places of worship or invite speakers from other faith communities to talk directly to pupils. This has a negative impact for pupils living in a multi-cultural society.

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

31. The school has good procedures for child protection, pupils' health and safety and welfare. The staff and some governors attended a one-day first aiders' course and incidents are dealt with appropriately, there is also a first aid box in each classroom. Procedures for dispensing medication are good. Some governors and all staff have attended a swimming course. The school liaises regularly with a number of outside agencies to ensure that appropriate support is available to pupils. However, one parent is paying for speech therapy for her child, because there are delays of up to 40 weeks before children with speech difficulties can be seen. Some staff development has been provided to support teachers working with pupils with special educational needs, but there is still a need for further development. Parents report that members of staff are very helpful and supportive when there are concerns about a child. Legal requirements are met regarding fire and electrical regulations. The school is cleaned by contract cleaners and the school have not been able to recruit a caretaker. These duties are currently fulfilled by a mixture of teaching and support staff, governors, parents and the adhoc employment of a handyman. This is to be reviewed.
32. Staff promote healthy eating through science and design and technology and they reinforce safe practice when pupils take part in physical education and science lessons.
33. The headteacher is the named person for child protection and has received the appropriate training. There are good procedures in place to record and monitor any concerns about a pupil. Although there is no recent history of staff training on child protection awareness, there has been in-service training on the procedures to follow if there are concerns. The school follow the local authority guidance for child protection.
34. The school's procedures for monitoring and promoting attendance are satisfactory. The attendance of pupils has improved by just over one per cent since the last report. This has a positive effect on pupils' progress and attainment. Parents report that their children like school. The school contacts parents on the first day of absence when they do not know the reason for a pupil's non-attendance at school. However, there is no late book to record and monitor pupils' punctuality. Pupils who arrive late report to the office to receive a mark but the class teacher made no comment when two pupils arrived late in class. The educational welfare officer visits the school regularly and is fully involved if there are concerns about a child.
35. Procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour are good and procedures for monitoring and eliminating oppressive behaviour are good. Teachers have high expectations of pupils to behave well in class, and staff act as good role models. There is a whole school policy that is used consistently by all teachers. House points are awarded for individual good work and good behaviour and marbles, collected in a jar, are awarded for whole class effort and behaviour. Marbles are used for whole class rewards of extra playtime; house points are totalled each week and the house with the most points has a ribbon on the shield. There is also whole school recognition for achievement; certificates are awarded for swimming and to pupils who take part in the cross-country race. Procedures for monitoring and eliminating oppressive behaviour are good. Parents report that behaviour has improved considerably since the arrival of the new head and bullying is no longer an issue. Any minor incidents are dealt with quickly and followed up. Scrutiny of the school's central record of poor behaviour shows a marked reduction in the number of incidents recorded. Pupils confirm that bullying 'doesn't really happen any more.'



36. The school procedures for assessing pupils' progress and attainment are good. The school has recently developed a new assessment policy. However it is too soon to say how effective it will be. Baseline assessment information is used to track pupils' progress and to project targets for statutory attainment tests, based on teacher assessment and optional testing in the intervening years. Procedures for assessing pupil's attainment and progress are built into mathematics, science and English. However, individual target setting lack a sufficiently sharp focus to enable pupils to improve their work, particularly in literacy and numeracy. The use of assessment information to guide curricular planning is satisfactory. Where assessment is in place the results are not yet sufficiently used to plan work that systematically builds on pupils' prior knowledge and understanding. Staff are currently building assessment and levelling portfolios and each pupil has a portfolio of work.
37. Procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' academic progress and personal development are good. The staff have a very good intuitive knowledge of pupils and provides good support on a day-to-day basis. Staff also monitor pupils' personal development through the rewards and sanction policy and through information gained from parents during parent-teacher consultation meetings. The progress of pupils with special needs is monitored through the progress they make towards the targets in the individual education plans. Teachers share information with learning support assistants to ensure effective support and monitoring of pupils' personal development.

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

38. Parents who attended the parents' meetings and those who completed and returned the parents' questionnaires are very happy with what the school provides and achieves. They were very fulsome in their praise of the new headteacher and expressed great confidence in him and the staff. Parents were very pleased with the changes which had been introduced. They were unanimous in the view that their children enjoyed school. The school has very effective links with parents, which significantly enhance the quality of learning for pupils.
39. The school provides a very good range of information to parents about their children's progress. Teachers' timetables go out to parents at the start of each term and this enables parents to have a full understanding of what their child is studying. The new pupil portfolios will allow parents to follow their children's progress as they move through the school. Regular newsletters keep parents up-to-date with all the forthcoming events; they include a timetable for clubs and provide information on new school policies. There are termly parent-teacher consultation meetings where parents can discuss their children's progress. The school holds a number of curriculum evenings termly, which enable parents to have better understanding of how their child learns. The prospectus is very attractively illustrated and informative, with details of projects to be studied at Key Stage 2 and visits to be made. However parents do not get the opportunity to view material used in sex education. There is also scope for a more evaluative approach to reporting on pupils' progress in the annual reports to parents. The reports stated mainly what had been covered in each subject. They did not report on what pupils know, understand and can do. Parents greatly appreciate the many informal opportunities they are given when staff and the headteacher make themselves available if a parent has any concerns. This ensures that the school has very effective links with parents.
40. Parental involvement in their children's learning is very good. Parents are very supportive of the school and attendance at parents' meetings is almost 100 per cent. Parents respond very well to the opportunities that the school provides for them to become more involved in their children's education, with attendance of over 50 per cent at curriculum evenings. Eleven parents help in the classroom on a regular basis and parents, including fathers, help with transport for swimming and the cross-country race. Two parents are attached to each class and meet with the headteacher every two weeks to discuss any ideas. Home and school diaries are used for an exchange of information and parents help regularly with homework and hearing their children read at home. This has a very positive effect on pupils' attainment and progress. All parents are members of the Parents' Guild and 25 parents are on the committee. They arrange a number of social and fund-raising activities. Two parents have been funded by the Guild for a course to teach swimming and

they regularly support pupils' swimming lessons. Governors provided paint and parents spent a week in the school redecorating the classrooms and the outside of the mobile classroom. Parents and governors also help with a number of extra-curricular activities. The help and support of parents and governors significantly enhance the curriculum and the quality of learning in the school.

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

41. The school has experienced a period of significant change with the appointment of a new headteacher and a new teaching staff during the last two years. The leadership and management of the school are now good and have improved since the last inspection. The headteacher has a clear vision of what the school should be and it is supported effectively by the staff team. This has a strong impact upon pupils and staff alike and contributes to the way teachers and staff work to improve pupils' social skills and academic performance. As a result, standards have improved and the pupils' behaviour and consideration for others is a strength of the school. It is a feature of the school that its aims and values are reflected in the daily lives of the pupils through a sense of confidence that there is equal access for all pupils to the opportunities provided by the school.
42. The governing body is effective in carrying out its legal responsibilities and now takes an active part in shaping the direction of the school. Governors know the strengths and weaknesses of the school and are fully involved in the management of finance and ensuring that monies are appropriately spent on agreed priorities. The chairman of governors and headteacher meet weekly to track progress and discuss issues that arise. A detailed computer tracking system is used to monitor expenditure. Most of the governors have regular involvement in the school. For example, one is fully involved in the development of information and communication technology to make the school ready for National Grid for Learning funding. Other governors support curriculum activities, such as a personal, social, health education club.
43. As is usual in small schools, class teachers are responsible for co-ordinating several subjects or aspects of the curriculum. They have responded conscientiously to this challenge. With the headteacher they have started to monitor standards in the subjects for which they are responsible and introduce curricular improvements. For example, they see their subject roles as monitoring, advising and providing resources for subjects. They have scrutinised the subject work and observed each other teaching. This is an emergent role which is having a good impact on the leadership and management of subjects. In addition, the headteacher has also played a key role in this process by involving the local education authority's advisory services in the implementation of the literacy and numeracy strategies. Plans are also in place to gain 'Investors in People' status.
44. The school development plan has clear targets for improvements based upon the high quality reviews of the school's work. Targets, dates for completion, the people responsible and the money needed are all identified and positive action taken to ensure that the initiatives are successful. Examples would be the increase in the numbers of computers available for pupils and the successful implementation of the literacy and numeracy strategies.
45. The accommodation of the school is adequate but the size of one of the classrooms has an adverse effect upon the organisation and quality of learning particularly when the classroom has to accommodate a large class with two or more age groups. In another classroom there are three age groups in one class. Although the teachers work hard to meet the needs of the pupils the existing accommodation is not helpful. The governors' proposals to provide an additional classroom on the site would enable greater flexibility in the organisation of classes so that no class would need to have more than two age groups learning together.
46. The school's resources are satisfactory and recent efforts to improve resources for literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology are having a positive impact on the quality of the learning. The school intends to carry out an audit of subject resources. Already the need for additional Big Books and guided reading to support the literacy programme is

acknowledged. Additional musical instruments and tapes are needed to improve the range of instrumental work.

47. Money for specific purposes such as staff development is used effectively. The school has a larger contingency fund than is usual, in anticipation of large expenditure when the extra classroom is provided.
48. The school has clear plans to balance the school budget and the evidence of the inspection is that the school is very careful about applying the principles of best value to the purchase of both resources and services. For example, at present the school does not have a caretaker but makes alternative contract cleaning arrangements to ensure that cleaning and allied services are maintained at low cost.
49. There are just enough teachers to cover the needs of pupils, although this is very difficult because of the broad age ranges in classes. The qualifications and experience of the teachers and support staff match the demands of the curriculum although there is a need for further training to meet the needs of statemented pupils. Good arrangements are made for the induction of new staff.

## **SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS**

50. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards the targets in their individual education plans. Those with prior higher attainment achieve well.
51. The attitudes of pupils with special educational needs are very good. During a 'brain gym' lesson, the pupils were following instructions, staying on task and were thoroughly enjoying the highly specialised exercises, which involved rapid changes of activities.
52. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good overall. Teachers' planning includes good adaptation of tasks to suit these pupils, within the mixed age and ability groups in classes. Good support is given, both in class and in withdrawal sessions, so that pupils make good progress towards the targets in their individual education plans. These targets are well-matched to pupils' needs, including both academic and social targets – for instance, getting to school on time and being the first to sit on the carpet. The new co-ordinator for special educational needs is aware of the need to liaise with class teachers on lesson planning for withdrawal sessions. Special needs support assistants are well-deployed and knowledgeable in supporting pupils with special educational needs, but they require further training on teaching supporting autistic pupils.
53. Although there is no formal identification of gifted and talented pupils, teachers plan work which appropriately challenges and extends the learning of more able pupils, ensuring that they achieve their best. Volunteer governors provide good support for these pupils.
54. Individual education plans for pupils with special educational needs are effective and include targets which are usually well focused and measurable. Targets for literacy and numeracy are the most common and are reviewed on a regular basis. As a result of review, pupils are moved to a higher or lower level of support. The school takes particular care to ensure that the needs of pupils with special educational needs are met and that the Code of Practice is implemented effectively. Lesson activities are adapted well; for example, in a music lesson a pupil with special educational needs was supported so well that he played a leading role in the conducting of an activity.
55. The use of assessment for pupils with special educational needs and the more able is good and is used effectively to plan well-focused targets, building on pupils' prior knowledge.
56. The co-ordinator for special educational needs meets termly with parents of pupils with special educational needs and informs them of the targets in pupils' individual education plans. However, parents are not yet involved in planning the targets with the school. Learning support assistants write in pupils' home school diaries a detailed account of the day's events.

57. Money allocated for pupils with special educational needs is used effectively. Funding for these pupils is currently under review, because of the increasing numbers of pupils involved and the higher level of support which the school needs to provide for statemented pupils. The special educational needs co-ordinator gives good leadership. Her focus on the implementation of individual education plans through the literacy hour has been effective in bringing about improvements.

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

58. In order to raise standards further and improve the quality of education offered, the headteacher and the governing body should:

- (1) Devise and adopt a systematic and progressive approach to the teaching of handwriting in Key Stage 1(*Paras. 2, 15, 71*)
- (2) Further develop information and communication technology, design and technology, and art by:
  - Ensuring that new policies and schemes of work take full account of the new requirements of the National Curriculum in order to raise standards
  - Improving resources for these subjects\*\*\*(*Paras. 5, 17,61,87, 92*)
- (3) As a matter of some urgency, negotiate further for the quick provision of an additional classroom so that pupils can be taught in more appropriate year settings and improve standards of attainment and progress\*\*\*(*13-14, 23, 45, 59, 73, 81*)

In addition, the headteacher and governing body should consider the following minor issues:

- Provide further training for those involved in the teaching of pupils with special educational needs, especially autism\*\*\*(*Para. 52*)
- Providing appropriate planned opportunities for outdoor play and work in the foundation stage.(*Para.55*)

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

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	38
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	17

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	25	51	24	0	0	0

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

### Information about the school's pupils

#### Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	0	80
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	3

FTE means full-time equivalent.

#### Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	17

#### English as an additional language

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

#### Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	19
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	8

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.2
National comparative data	5.6

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0
National comparative data	0.5

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



### **Ethnic background of pupils**

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	80
Any other minority ethnic group	0

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

### **Exclusions in the last school year**

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

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

### **Teachers and classes**

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	3.9
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	20.5
Average class size	26.7

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

Total number of education support staff	3
Total aggregate hours worked per week	50

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### **Financial information**

Financial year	2000/2001
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	£
Total income	181003
Total expenditure	173130
Expenditure per pupil	2141
Balance brought forward from previous year	10596
Balance carried forward to next year	18469

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	80
Number of questionnaires returned	46

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	65	35	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	61	39	0	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	35	61	0	0	4
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	39	57	2	0	2
The teaching is good.	63	37	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	61	35	4	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	80	20	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	67	33	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	67	30	3	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	67	33	0	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	57	43	0	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	61	27	9	2	0



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

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

59. Children enter the reception class in the year in which they become five and are taught with those who are already five, and those in Year 1. This means that their teacher must plan for three different age groups and all the differing abilities, and it is to her credit that she achieves so much. The teacher provides a good balance of free and directed activities and ensures that all tasks set are purposeful and lead to good learning and progress. There is, however, a lack of sufficient planned opportunities for outdoor work and play. Curriculum planning takes clear account of the needs of children under five as they work towards the national early learning goals. It shows a clear and logical progression towards the beginning of National Curriculum studies by the end of the summer term. Ongoing observation and assessment of pupils' progress are good, particularly the detailed notes taken on the attainment and progress of pupils with special educational needs.

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

60. Children enjoy coming to school. They are excited and well-motivated to learn how to sit quietly and concentrate. They listen well and speak confidently to groups and to the class. The teacher ensures their participation in class discussions without coercion, and they are learning to be aware of the needs of others. Children settle into school routine quickly and easily, learning to take turns and not interrupt when others are speaking. They are learning to develop a knowledge and respect for other religions as, for example, when they celebrate Chinese New Year. Children are likely to exceed the early learning goals by the end of the reception year.

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

61. Children enjoy listening to stories and poems and join in traditional rhymes and repetitions from familiar stories with enthusiasm. They are beginning to recognise which letters make the sounds they know, and that print carries meaning. They respond well to the teacher's encouragement to expand their one-word answers and to explain how they have arrived at the answers to problems, for instance, in the numeracy hour. Children ask and answer questions sensibly. They use their language in the role-play corner, currently a 'hat shop', to act out their own experiences and explore the words used. The more able read common words and simple sentences and make good attempts to read the stories they have written during the literacy hour. The teacher makes good use of effective questioning to help children retell, in accurate sequence, the stories they have heard. Children are beginning to write but the teacher lays insufficient emphasis on the correct size and spacing of letters and children know that what they write does not look like the work of others who are more accomplished. Despite this, however, they are likely to meet the nationally expected early learning goals by the end of the reception year.

#### **Mathematical development**

62. Children are likely to exceed the early learning goals in mathematical development. They count reliably and confidently up to ten and recognise numerals one to nine. The overall quality of teaching is good and children's mathematical language is developing well, as they confidently and accurately talk about 'more' or 'less.' The teacher uses children's art skills in reinforcing their work on seeking, identifying and creating repeating patterns in paint. Children respond well and are generally correct in meeting the teacher's challenges on identifying simple shapes like triangles, squares and circles. They explore and construct correctly a range of three-dimensional shapes and patterns in colour when they play with small construction equipment. Children develop their speaking and listening skills as they talk and are developing their confidence in writing down two added numbers, for example,  $2 + 6 = 8$ . The teacher makes good use of flash-cards to target questions accurately in the introductions to numeracy hours and children happily chant number rhymes to reinforce their learning.

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

63. Children investigate objects and materials with curiosity and inventiveness. They enthusiastically take part in a 'hunt' for the materials used in their school building, and successfully carry out experiments to discover which material is most suitable for keeping the rain out. The quality of teaching is good overall and the teacher makes good curriculum links with art when she challenges children to illustrate their knowledge of night and day in paint. Children begin to select the tools needed to shape and join materials; for example, making a cat with a moving tail, joined with a paper fastener. They produce pictures using an art program on the computer and learn how to change fonts in word-processing. They build and construct with a range of apparatus large and small, and made effective three-dimensional models of houses in painted cardboard. Children learn to recognise the similarities and differences between toys old and new when they follow up a visit to the Toy Museum. They are likely to exceed the early learning goals by the end of the reception year.

## **Physical development**

64. Children are beginning to move with confidence and safety in their physical education lessons in the hall. The quality of teaching is good overall and the teacher ensures that they understand the need for space between their work and that of others. Children move with increasing control and co-ordination during dance lessons, and practise to improve their performance. They run, jump and hop with increasing confidence and competence. They handle a range of tools and materials with improving dexterity, and are developing good control of pencils. They successfully manipulate small apparatus, like jigsaws and construction kits. They have some opportunities to practise and develop their climbing and balancing skills in the small, but well-equipped play area outside the classroom, but these opportunities are not regularly planned. Despite this, children are likely to exceed the national early learning goals in this area.

## **Creative development**

65. Children enjoy singing in assemblies, in class sessions and in the weekly music lesson taken by a visiting music specialist. The overall quality of teaching is good and in these lessons, they are developing an awareness of sound patterns and movements in music, and are beginning to compose simple accompaniments to their singing. They mix colours successfully, and explore texture, form and shape when they play with play-dough, responding to their teacher's challenge to make two, four or six pieces of fruit. Children are beginning to express their thoughts and feelings in dance, and use their imagination in the stories they write and in the activities they role-play in the 'hat shop.' They are likely to meet the early learning goals by the end of the reception year.

## **ENGLISH**

66. The findings during the inspection are that the overall standards in English are broadly in line with national standards.
67. The results of the inspection point to a picture of improving standards in English which have come about as a result of the school's commitment to improvement through the monitoring of teaching and learning and the successful introduction of the national literacy strategy. Improved planning and assessment procedures are also promoting positive attitudes to learning. Although standards declined following the last inspection, the school is taking effective steps to address the weaknesses in the subject and the school makes full use of booster class funding to help lower attaining pupils in English.
68. By the age of seven, the majority of pupils talk confidently using complete sentences to express their ideas clearly. They are keen to participate in discussions and listen carefully to what others have to say. For example in the mixed reception and Year 1 class, pupils were talking confidently about their birthdays and their news. They have also learned the convention of speaking only

when holding 'rhino' and listening quite well. Most pupils want to speak and are eager to make contributions to class discussions. Teachers use questioning well to probe pupils' understanding, encouraging them to speak at length and asking open questions which anticipate longer answers. By the age of eleven, all pupils speak fluently in a range of settings and sometimes in front of the whole school. For example, in assembly pupils from Years 5 and 6 spoke confidently about 'How I get my own way'. In a literacy lesson pupils expressed their ideas, feelings and personal opinions when comparing the two poems 'The Tyger' by William Blake and 'The Tiger' by Leslie Norris. The most able pupils compare the archaic language of Blake's poem with the more modern verse and say why they preferred one version to the other. The teacher takes care to involve the low attaining pupils with questions that allow them to provide shorter but appropriate answers.

69. Standards in reading are below the national average at seven and in line with national average at eleven. By the end of Year 2, higher attaining pupils read fluently and accurately with some expression, aiding comprehension and enjoyment. They make use of several strategies such as phonics or picture clues to build up unfamiliar words. They read both fiction and non-fiction books for pleasure at home and read to adults at home and in school regularly. One pupil talked about Harry Potter and wishes he wasn't a muggle'. Pupils of average ability read accurately but haltingly. They use their knowledge of sounds well and read everyday for pleasure. The lower attainers read more slowly and their lack of fluency prevents them from a greater understanding and enjoyment of the books they read. Reading records show that progress through the reading levels is satisfactory.
70. Pupils' progress in reading by the time they are eleven is good. Almost all the pupils in Year 6 are able to read fluently, accurately and with expression and they use books confidently. These pupils were able to talk about a range of authors including Tolkein, A.A. Milne and Roald Dahl. They read fiction and non-fiction books extensively at home and at school. They can talk about the use of the index, give examples to illustrate different types of book, and retell the story of the books they are reading. One pupil was able to predict what would happen next in the story he was reading. These pupils have already learned the basic library and research skills and some of them are already using the Internet to find out information. The lower attaining pupils' reading is regularly supported by parents in addition to the extra help received in school.
71. Writing standards are below the national average at seven years but in line with the national average at eleven years. This is because of the relative weakness in the teaching of basic skills of handwriting and presentation in Key Stage 1. By the end of Year 2 pupils write about a range of topics within their experience, for instance, a holiday in Spain and a visit to the Rock of Gibraltar and seeing a boat called a 'destroyer' in the harbour. Others write about the natural environment and how 'the spider's web is sticky and it catches flies'. Another was writing about bees and described the beehive as a 'home for hundreds of bees'. Their writing demonstrates a growing understanding of the use of capital letters and full stops, the choice of appropriate words and the link between ideas and events in structured sentences. By the time pupils reach Year 6, most can convey meaning clearly and use an appropriate range of punctuation accurately, although lower attaining pupils do not use it consistently. Pupils show in discussion and in their written exercises that they understand grammatical concepts like possessive nouns, for example 'a knight's sword', contractions like 'I've lost my stamp album' and alliteration like 'crazy caterpillar crunches the cabbage'. Lower attaining pupils are provided with carefully structured tasks which call for small steps forward. For example, one pupil using such a task sheet had to list arguments about a proposal to build a superstore on an open area of farmland. Both higher and lower attainers use dictionaries to assist their spelling.
72. Teachers work well with classroom support workers and other helpers to offer an appropriately adapted curriculum to pupils with special educational needs. Support staff are well briefed and make a very positive contribution to the quality of learning. Lessons are well planned and are effectively based upon the national literacy strategy. Literacy and speaking and listening skills are used effectively in a range of other subjects and activities in the curriculum to promote learning. The eco-school project provides significant opportunities to discuss the environmental problems. In history they talk about the life and wives of Henry VIII and his break with the Roman

church. In science they describe the properties of different rocks as they handle clay, fool's gold and chalk. Pupils make significant use of speaking and listening to discuss and reinforce their knowledge and understanding.

73. Teaching is good overall but there are variations in some lessons and in particular the classes where there are three age groups and the teachers are challenged to meet the needs of all the pupils. This often presents great difficulties for teachers in planning suitable work and sometimes results in work which is too easy for the older and more able pupils. Teachers make effective choices of whole class texts and activities and use these well to develop pupils' skills and understanding. As a result, pupils of all ages are enthusiastic about the texts they read in class. They are eager to participate in discussions about them, listening carefully to what is said by both the teacher and their peers. For example, one class was studying the poem 'Sir Patrick Spens' and looking for clues about the archaic language to demonstrate that it was old. The teacher used good question and answer techniques to direct the thinking of pupils and was able to involve pupils of all ability levels. Teachers offer good additional support to pupils who require it and set work to meet the needs of all pupils across the attainment range. This has a positive impact on the quality of the learning. Lesson time is generally used well so that pupils have sufficient opportunity to finish their work and share their achievements with others. Teachers have clear learning objectives. Throughout the school, teachers conscientiously assess the progress pupils make but they do not always use their assessments to adjust their planning.
74. Resources are well used but there is a need to increase the number of big books for class use and to promote more books for guided reading. The school has a large number of books available but some of them are dated in content and need replacing with more recent materials. Most books, fiction and non-fiction, are class based but there is a small central library for reading which is well-used by pupils.
75. Pupils throughout the school behave well and have positive attitudes to learning in English and literacy lessons. At each stage they took turns fairly in discussion, listened to others attentively and co-operated very well in group activities.
76. All aspects of the curriculum are appropriately covered through the range of work teachers provide. The English co-ordinator has a good understanding of the weaknesses and strengths in the subject and has ensured that other colleagues get appropriate support and advice. The teaching is monitored effectively across the key stages and work is also scrutinised. Useful pupil portfolios of work matched to Curriculum 2000 levels in English are currently being developed.

## **MATHEMATICS**

77. In the lessons seen, standards of attainment in mathematics were broadly in line with the national expectation in both key stages. At the end of Key Stage 2, standards were above the national expectation with a particularly able small group of pupils. Although standards did decline following the previous inspection, the improvement over the past year has been rapid.
78. Pupils in reception play number games such as accurately counting monkeys to ten. The teacher's good use of flash-cards ensures pupils recognise numerals from one to nine. Pupils also find 'more' or 'less' than ten. They correctly cut out and paste a sequence in a number line to 20. In these well-planned activities, groups of pupils carry out simple instructions to make the required number of fruits in play-dough, for instance, six, three and two. Pupils work in pairs with dice to make a board game in some very good independent learning. They work well together in pairs, small groups and as a whole class with Year 1, and all pupils join in the work enthusiastically. Pupils with special educational needs and prior lower attainment successfully order numbers one to ten and are beginning to record their answers in writing. In Year 1, pupils effectively use a number square to count and order numbers to 100. They successfully use the number square to count in tens, for example, six, 16, 26, etc. They chant number songs to help their learning, and successfully identify bigger and smaller numbers. Pupils copy numbers on a worksheet to make a game, working well in pairs. They make accurate symmetrical patterns with

gummed paper and 'butterfly' painting, responding to the teacher's challenge for counting, sorting and identifying shapes. The teacher makes good use of art skills for painting repeating patterns. Pupils of all abilities develop the correct mathematical language, but their recorded work often features numbers written back to front, and the teacher does not put sufficient emphasis on writing them correctly.

79. At the end of Key Stage 1, pupils recall pairs of multiples to 10 to make 100 in well-paced mental mathematics sessions. The class teacher is very enthusiastic and conveys her love of the subject well to engage and sustain pupils' interest. Pupils of all abilities know that adding 500 to 500 makes 1000. The teacher uses very effective questioning to allow pupils to explore and understand the work they are doing, giving reasonable explanations of how they arrive at the answer. Lessons are very well-paced, stimulating and challenging pupils of all abilities to think. Pupils with special educational needs or those of prior lower attainment successfully play games involving adding and subtracting tens. These pupils were provided with specifically designed worksheets, and were well-supported by an experienced classroom assistant. Higher attaining pupils count on in 10s and 100s from 26 or 41, and count back from 80 to 0 in 10s. They also accurately count on to 40 from 27, or 40 from 36, and some count on from 500 or 324 in hundreds. The class teacher uses the beginning and end of the lessons to provide good opportunities for developing literacy skills in the form of the correct mathematical vocabulary; for example, factors and multiples. Scrutiny of past work shows that pupils are skilled in searching for and creating patterns, including those made by halving numbers. There is some good work on shapes, describing polygons in terms of sides and corners. They calculate accurately in money and number in mental tests. They make simple picture graphs of the size of their families. The teacher also makes effective use of art skills for pupils to demonstrate their early work on percentages. The use of information and communication technology is developing well but there is a lack of appropriate software at the end of the key stage. There is good development in the recording of mathematical problems but the teacher does not always correct badly-written figures.
80. In Key Stage 2, previous work is progressively built upon and pupils make effective use of a variety of strategies to solve problems set by their teachers. In Year 3, pupils count in 100s, and read, write and order whole numbers to 1000, with a good understanding of place value, knowing what each digit represents. Pupils of all abilities recognise that multiples of 10 and 100 end in one or two noughts. They use mathematical language precisely - for instance, multiples, digits and factors. In Year 4, pupils seek, identify and create patterns in number, giving a clear explanation of why and how a pattern occurs, with higher prior attainers taking into account negative numbers. They use the four operations of number accurately and confidently to seek patterns. The teacher's careful planning and good adaptation of work to suit the needs of all pupils ensure that they make good progress in their knowledge and understanding of number sequences and patterns. Pupils accurately and quickly recite multiplication tables, solving problems by using the four operations to 100 mentally. They understand halving, doubling and approximating. Occasionally, pupils with special educational needs or lower prior attainment have trouble recognising a pattern of four, eight and 12, but then, with prompting, they clearly explain their reasoning to others. They know the names of simple and complex shapes; for instance, triangles, rectangles, pentagons, cylinders and cuboids. The teacher's good knowledge and expertise ensures all pupils make satisfactory progress. Year 5 pupils understand the terms negative and consecutive numbers, and clearly explain their reasoning and methods for finding the answers to 'magic' number squares. At the end of the key stage, pupils use inverse operations to calculate mentally. They use mathematical terms precisely, for example, minus, multiples and factors. They double numbers accurately, and understand how a half is expressed as a decimal. They seek for and explain relationships and patterns in number. Pupils make nets of solid shapes to construct them, and use their art skills in work on rotational symmetry. Scrutiny of past work reveals good evidence of many mathematical investigations which include work on probability, ratio and some data handling. Pupils have an accurate understanding of square numbers and successfully use their mathematical knowledge and understanding to construct story equations. These able children benefit from having two teachers each week who present them with differing and increasing demands. Pupils' presentation of their recorded work is satisfactory and they give very clear, logical explanations of the conclusions they have drawn. Both teachers mark work regularly and

with encouragement, but these written comments do not always show pupils how to improve their performance. The use of information and communication technology is developing well.

81. The overall quality of teaching is good. Teachers have successfully adapted the national numeracy strategy to the needs of their pupils and go to great lengths to ensure that the work set is suited to the needs of the three age ranges in their classes – no easy task! Numeracy hours embrace all the elements of the framework and group activities are suitably planned and carried out. Very good use is made of the plenary sessions at the end of lessons to check on progress and reinforce what has been learned. Pupils are encouraged to use their numeracy skills in subjects like science and geography, but this use is under-emphasised in design and technology.
82. Teachers' planning also includes appropriate assessment opportunities so that the teachers have a good knowledge of what pupils know, can do and understand. Assessment procedures are good but are too new to have had significant impact on target-setting for individual pupils and consequently, their attainment and progress. The co-ordinator has a very good understanding of the role, which is effectively exercised in terms of monitoring and evaluating provision and classroom practice.

## **SCIENCE**

83. Owing to the time constraints of the inspection, it was possible to see only one lesson in each key stage. Judgements are therefore based on the examination of teachers' planning, pupils' past work and work on display, and discussions with staff.
84. Standards of attainment are above the national expectation at the end of both key stages, due to the emphasis placed on investigative and experimental work which enhances pupils' knowledge and understanding. At the end of Key Stage 1, pupils have a clear knowledge and understanding of the difference between natural and man-made materials. Pupils make effective use of literacy and numeracy skills in recording their experiments, including the use of tables and charts. They present their findings in words, pictures and simple tables; for instance, their results of investigations into changes in materials as when an ice-cube is melted or when jelly is made. Their correct construction of electrical circuits is recorded in labelled drawings. Planning makes it clear that work on life and living processes forms part of the summer term's curriculum, so that all aspects are covered in sufficient depth. Pupils of all abilities make satisfactory progress in their knowledge, understanding and skills in scientific enquiry and investigation. In the lesson observed, pupils made good progress in their work on rocks and soils, when they examined crystals, fossils, sandstone, pebbles and soft rocks. They made good use of their listening skills in describing similarities and differences - for instance, quartz as 'heavy and sparkling', and 'chalk has a different texture.' Those with prior higher attainment explained simply that flint is used for arrowheads because of its sharpness, and that slate is used on the roofs of houses because it does not absorb water. All pupils were enthusiastic about the topic and behaved well, responding well to their teacher's high expectation. The teacher's good questioning technique in directing her enquiries to pupils of differing abilities made a significant contribution to the development of literacy skills. Pupils were fascinated when the teacher explained that iron pyrites was not really gold. The teacher also made good use of books to illustrate the carvings of American presidents at Mount Rushmore, and pupils were able to relate this new learning to their existing knowledge.
85. At the end of Key Stage 2, the majority of pupils are confident in their understanding and correct use of associated technical language when discussing the characteristics of living things. They had good recall of the acronym 'MRGREEN', correctly pointing out movement, respiration, growth, excretion, excitability and nutrition. They researched appropriate information from the resources provided, understanding the use of an index to speed up research. Those with prior lower attainment confidently and accurately cut and stuck, sequencing correctly the life-cycle of a seed plant. Pupils of all abilities know that some fruits and vegetables grow above ground, whilst others grow below. The scrutiny of past work reveals a large volume of quite well-presented work with some extensive writing from personal research for the prior higher attainers. Pupils have an above average knowledge and understanding of the human body, including the skeleton and muscles.

Their tables and charts of the results of hearing tests they have carried out are beautifully drawn and labelled. The investigations completed on forces show a clear understanding of friction and gravity, including the moon's influence, and of floating and sinking. This work is well illustrated in pupils' vivid posters on forces - for example, pushing, pulling, twisting, squashing and bending. In the lesson observed, the quality of teaching was good with a well-planned progression and tasks set which were adapted to the differing needs of individuals. The teacher provided good links with art when pupils were asked to make close observational drawings of the seeds in various fruits and vegetables. She made sure that she gave appropriate guidance on health and safety, for instance, the risk in eating fruit and vegetables handled by many people. The homework task set - naming the parts of a plant - was appropriate and supported learning in the lesson.

86. The quality of teaching is good overall. Planning is appropriately based on national guidance and work is in progress on producing a scheme of work to cover all three key stages. The co-ordinator has a very good understanding of the role which is effectively exercised in terms of the monitoring and evaluation of provision and classroom practice. Resources are generally adequate although there are some shortages, for instances, in bulbs and wires for experiments with electricity.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

87. As art is taught alternately with design and technology, no lessons were observed during the inspection. Therefore it is not possible to make a judgement on the quality of teaching and learning, or of attitudes and behaviour. However, the completed work in pupils' sketch-books and on display gives a reasonable impression that standards of attainment are below the national expectation. The subject suffered over the last few years, especially since the previous inspection, because of recent national emphases on other subjects. It is only now that art is being re-established in the light of new National Curriculum requirements, and it is clear that the subject is largely used to support learning across all areas of the curriculum, rather than being taught in its own right. There is a need for more resources to broaden the limited range of artistic experiences offered. The school has recognised this as an area for development.
88. In Year 1, pupils draw self-portraits and paint seascapes, some with a good illusion of movement. They use their art skills in mathematics when painting repeated patterns, and illustrate their work in other subjects, such as history, English and religious education. At the end of Key Stage 2, pupils with prior higher attainment produce some good close observational drawings of still life arrangements. They paint or draw portraits based on family photographs, some producing satisfactory likenesses. They use their art skills in subjects such as history and religious education and to illustrate their work on the environment and conservation.
89. Teachers' planning shows that the subject now meets statutory requirements but it is evident that their use of the sketch-book is insufficient for the teaching of skills so that junior pupils have little to build upon. There are no procedures for assessing pupils' achievement and the co-ordinator has had little opportunity to monitor the quality of teaching and learning. The co-ordinator has a good understanding of the role and is looking forward to developing the subject fully over the rest of this academic year.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

90. The subject is taught alternately with art, and only one lesson was observed in each key stage. There is therefore no judgement on the quality of teaching and learning, or attitudes and behaviour. Because of the recent national emphases on other subjects and the reduced curriculum of the past couple of years, the subject is only now being re-established in the school. From the evidence available in pupils' completed work and work on display, standards of attainment are below the national expectation at both key stages, particularly in the design process.

91. At the end of Key Stage 1, pupils have had some experience of making coil pots and practising a limited range of joining materials, for example, with paper staples and adhesive tape. Year 1 pupils successfully make cats with moving parts, using staples to join. In a lesson where they examined a range of sandwiches to give their opinions on their taste, appearance and ingredients, pupils were beginning to understand and evaluate why different people like different foods, for example, the taste and texture. The class teacher was very effective in giving cues which enabled pupils to draw on their existing knowledge. Year 3 pupils used the information obtained to begin writing their own recipes for sandwiches. Year 6 pupils have successfully made books for young children, with moving parts and showing clear evidence of a form of market research as to suitable content and style. They work with an established artist in making silk paper, and make effective models of ladybirds and their favourite dishes from papier-mâché. There was one piece of work on display of a labelled drawing as a design for a chair, but otherwise there is very little evidence of work on the design process, using the mathematical skills of measuring, with no evaluations or modelling. Neither is the use of information and communication technology sufficiently well-developed to support learning in the subject.
92. Planning is based on national guidance and shows that the subject meets the statutory requirements of the new National Curriculum. Procedures for assessing how well pupils achieve are unsatisfactory. The co-ordinator has a satisfactory understanding of the role but has little time, with all her other responsibilities, to be an effective influence on the teaching of the subject. However, the school is aware of the shortcomings in provision and has prioritised this in the current school development plan.

## **GEOGRAPHY and HISTORY**

93. Both subjects are securely represented within the school's curriculum. However planning arrangements meant that no geography was taught or viewed during the inspection. As a result of this, there was insufficient evidence to make judgements about the standards of teaching and attainment, the quality of learning and the extent to which pupils respond positively in the subject.
94. However younger pupils in Year 2 study the Isle of Struay and make comparisons between Struay and Fordcombe. They learn about the different kinds of work carried out by the people on the island working on farms and in the Post Office and other employment. During their history studies they learn about Ancient Egypt from both the geographical and historical perspectives. In Years 4, 5 and 6 pupils study topics like water from a geographical standpoint. Extension studies include studies of rainfall in the British Isles and the areas with high and low rainfall. They learn about climate change and the risk of more deserts developing in the world. A scrutiny of the work reveals that the higher attaining pupils write clear and accurate descriptions of water plants, the habitats of fish including the eel and the common bream. They begin to learn how human activities affect the environment, what people do to sustain environments, how people can cause damage and the importance of location in terms of people's lives. The recent school initiative and the setting up of the eco-school project also contributes significantly to the environmental aspects of geography such as re-cycling.
95. Standards in history are broadly typical of pupils nationally by the ages of seven and eleven years and most pupils make satisfactory gains in learning as they move through the school. In one lesson observed during the inspection reception and Year 1 pupils were being introduced to the topic of homes today and yesterday. Pupils were describing the features of their homes prior to finding out what homes were like in the past. By using everyday terms pertaining to the passage of time and by relating happenings, objects and events in their homes and lives they were gaining an emerging sense of chronology. The teacher used good question and answer techniques to encourage the pupils to reflect on what they had learned and to form judgements and opinions of their own. The teacher's good subject knowledge and her enthusiasm were conveyed to the pupils as they also gained a sense of awe and wonder for such aged relics of the past.
96. Pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6 are studying the Tudors and are learning to answer questions like 'Who are the Tudors? What did they do?' They learn the importance of monarchs in government and



compare the monarch today with Tudor Times. The higher attainers write good clear written work which shows a factual understanding of the Tudor period.

97. The quality of teaching is good overall. In one of the lessons lesson seen, the teaching was very good. The lesson was well planned and the teacher used class discussions effectively to explore the pupils' knowledge and thinking about the topic.
98. Pupils show an interest in both geography and history. They listen to teachers attentively and are keen to answer questions during whole class discussions.
99. With the recent emphases on literacy and numeracy, the co-ordinator has had little time to develop geography and history, especially in terms of monitoring the quality of teaching and learning. Resources for both subjects are sufficient, and visits to various places of historical and geographical interest, for example, the proposed visit to Hever Castle, greatly enhance pupils' learning in both subjects.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

100. Until the new headteacher took up his appointment last Easter, there were no up-to-date computers in the classrooms for pupils to learn and practise their skills. Owing to the time constraints of the inspection, only three lessons were observed, all in Key Stage 1. Evidence for standards in Key Stage 2 was taken from lessons in other subjects of the curriculum when information and communication technology (ICT) formed an integral part of lessons. Judgements are therefore based on examination of teachers' planning, pupils' past work and work on display, and discussions with staff and parent volunteers.
101. Standards of attainment are broadly in line with the national expectation at the end of Key Stage 1, but are below average at the end of Key Stage 2. At Key Stage 1, pupils understand that it is necessary to ask questions to gain information and that this information can be gathered from many sources, including modern technology. The majority know that 'communication' means keeping in touch and making contact with people. They understand that there is a variety of communication methods; for example, talking, touching, smiling, signing, letters, telephones – leading to a final discussion about the use of electronic mail. Pupils with prior higher attainment know how smoke-signals were used in America, and about drums in Africa as means of communication. They make very good attempts to explain how electronic mail works, including the possibilities of sending images and voice-mail. Some higher attaining pupils know that 'chat-rooms' are possible. Teachers' explanations are so effective that, by the end of the lesson, all pupils understand that electronic mail usually requires a computer, a telephone and a modem. Pupils use their ICT skills to support their learning in mathematics, for instance, when they attend a computer club at lunchtime and learn how to instruct a programmable toy. They also use a music program to make a decision tree and sort compositions into various categories. They are confident in the use of listening stations to help their work in literacy. In the lessons observed, the quality of teaching was satisfactory, and they were very useful introductions to prepare pupils for practical skills lessons later in the term.
102. In Key Stage 2, pupils' skills are much less well-developed, because of the lack of learning opportunities in the past. By the end of the key stage, they are becoming familiar with the keyboard and the mouse, although they type very slowly. They use their mathematical skills in writing procedures for a program on angles and degrees. Pupils build upon this work and practise their skills in the lunchtime computer club. They use word-processing to enhance the presentation of their written work, and produce some computer-generated pictures. As their teachers' expertise improves, they convey their enthusiasm well to their pupils to engage and sustain their interest. However, the lack of previous experience means that currently, teachers have little to build upon and it will take time before the skills being learned in Key Stage 1 percolate through to the junior class.

103. The quality of teaching is good overall in Key Stage 2. Planning is based on national guidance and work set is carefully matched to the differing needs of individual pupils. The co-ordinator has a very good understanding of the role, which is effectively exercised in terms of the monitoring and evaluation of provision and teaching. Resources are reasonably adequate, but there is a lack of software for several subjects, including mathematics in the transition class, and art. Governors are very supportive and one is particularly involved in helping to prepare the school in readiness for their participation in the National Grid for Learning. There is a planned web-site, based on the school prospectus, fully prepared and ready for publication as soon as the Webmaster gives permission.

## **MUSIC**

104. The standards of pupils' achievements in music by the time they are seven years old are broadly in line with the national expectation and by the time they are eleven, these standards are maintained. This is a decline since the last inspection but recent improvements have brought standards into line with national expectations across the whole school. Music is a strong feature of school life. In school assemblies, pupils sing a good range of songs and hymns, some from memory, tunefully and with good diction. A very high proportion of the pupils in school are learning to play the recorder. These pupils make a significant contribution to assemblies as they play music when the pupils assemble and leave the school hall. They play tunes like 'Waltzing Matilda' with enthusiasm and zest.
105. Only two lessons were observed during the inspection but this small sample was sufficient to confirm the standards achieved in the subject. In the one lesson observed the teacher was supported by a visiting specialist who regularly leads and supports the work. The lesson was one of a series teaching about loud and soft sounds. The pupils use a range of percussion instruments, discuss their care and demonstrate loud and soft on their instruments showing that an instrument is only as loud as they make it. During the lesson the pupils sat quietly in a circle and sang tunefully 'I jump out of bed'. They had a good recall of the loud and soft activities learned in previous lessons. They carried out these activities with enthusiasm and enjoyment. Part of the lesson involved listening to two tapes demonstrating an orchestra playing loud and soft music. The pupils discussed what they heard and talked thoughtfully about the different features of the music and some understood know the different families of instruments that make up a full orchestra. A specialist feature of this lesson was the way pupils were invited to conduct. Several pupils, including those with special educational needs, took the opportunity with enthusiasm as they signed to the class when to sing loud and soft.
106. The second lesson observed involved pupils from Years 4, 5 and 6. They were learning about the different styles of music and what is involved in making music. This work was in preparation for composing later in the term. They played a listening game, working in pairs with a wide range of instruments including recorders, wood blocks, tambourines, glockenspiels. They were exploring the relationship between sounds and how the music reflects the different intentions. They were learning to listen and respond to the sounds made by the different instruments and whether they were able to replicate the same pattern with their paired instrument. Year 6 pupils were able to play patterns of sounds accurately. During the lesson they were also learning the meaning of pitch, tempo, timbre, texture and duration in the context of music making. The pupils responded well to the task and discovered the possibility of replicating the sound pattern made by their partners in the listening game. However, the use of information and communication technology is limited by the lack of appropriate resources.
107. There was insufficient evidence to make an overall judgement about the quality of teaching. The music curriculum is enriched by the many opportunities for performance both in school and the local community. Pupils regularly support church activities, for example, Harvest Festival and other services. The choir and recorders perform carols around the village tree and the school arranges occasional workshops led by visiting specialists to demonstrate wind instruments to each class.

108. Since the last inspection the subject policy and scheme of work have been amended to accommodate new national guidelines. Lessons are well planned and organised, but the co-ordinator has little opportunity to monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching and learning.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

109. Overall standards in physical education are average and some aspects are good, especially in Key Stage 2. This is an improvement since the last inspection when standards were judged unsatisfactory. The school has taken account of National Curriculum guidance and developed a curriculum which covers the main areas of games, gymnastics, dance and swimming. The school accommodation has been modified since the last inspection to form a small school hall. Good use is made of this facility but it is still a restricted space for class activities. A system of alternating gymnastics with swimming for the older pupils works efficiently.
110. One gymnastics lesson was observed during the inspection with a group of Year 4 pupils. The pupils were working out a routine with a good start and finish whilst maintaining good bodily control throughout. After a well structured warming up session, the pupils responded enthusiastically, making good use of the limited space. They demonstrated a range of activities including stretching, joint mobility, raising both heart and breathing rates. They developed a routine involving different ways of travelling across large mats, for example, forward, sideways, backward and tucked rolls. The pupils collaborated well in small groups and from the observation of others they were beginning to refine, improve and modify their performances. Pupils with special educational needs made good progress and higher attaining pupils performed complex sequences successfully. The teacher had a good understanding of the basic skills and managed the pupils very well.
111. The second lesson observed involved some of the pupils in reception and Year 1. They were following instructions and observing and appreciating others in a dance and drama lesson. The reception children were learning to develop their awareness of space, self and others and moving with greater control and confidence. Year 1 pupils were achieving simple sequences like hop, step and kick. Although the lesson plan was appropriate, the lesson lacked pace at times and opportunities were lost to use the older pupils to demonstrate their skills to the reception pupils.
112. There was insufficient evidence to make a reliable judgement on the overall quality of teaching. The co-ordinator is well-informed and enthusiastic but has little opportunity to monitor the quality of teaching and learning in other classes. The school policy for physical education aims to develop a measure of physical fitness as well as learning to play in a team game. The inter-school sports fixture lists indicate that the school fully participates in netball, football and cross-country running matches and tournaments. The pupils talk enthusiastically about these events and the school presents awards to pupils who successfully participate in these tournaments. The standards achieved in swimming are very good and all the pupils in Year 6 this year are expected to achieve the 25 metres standard.
113. The extra-curricular sports activities are well supported by parents and overall the range of activities provided is much wider than at the time of the last inspection; for example, 'brain gym' sessions which comprise of a range of physical activities to stimulate the brain and to improve fine and gross motor control. These sessions occur three times each week. They are well structured and pupils make good progress with their co-ordination, eye-contact and following instructions. This is due to the high level of adult support and the very good programme which is being followed consistently.