

INSPECTION REPORT

BROOK COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL

Brook , Near Ashford

LEA area: Kent

Unique reference number: 118373

Headteacher: Mr. P. Stringer

Reporting inspector: Mr. Adrian Everix
23079

Dates of inspection: 3rd – 6th April 2000

Inspection number: 194829

Inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4-11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Brook Primary School Spelders Hill Brook Near Ashford Kent
Postcode:	TN25 5PB
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Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr. S. Pierce
Date of previous inspection:	March 1996

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Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Adrian Everix	Registered inspector	Mathematics	The characteristics and effectiveness of the school.
		Science	The school's results and pupils' achievements.
		Information technology	Teaching and learning.
		Music	Leadership and management.
		Physical education	Issues for action
Elizabeth Dickson	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, behaviour and personal development.
			How well the school cares for its pupils.
			How well the school works in partnership with parents.
Marianne Harris	Team inspector	English	How good are the curricular and other learning opportunities?
		Areas of learning for children under five.	
		Art	
		Design and technology	
		Geography	
		History	
		Equality of opportunity	
		Special educational needs	

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The Registrar
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Brook Community School caters for pupils between the ages of 4 and 11. At the time of the inspection there were 48 full time pupils and one child under five attending part-time. The school is much smaller than other primary schools nationally. Around one third attend from Brook Village, with the majority coming from surrounding villages and the nearby town of Ashford. No pupils are currently from ethnic minority backgrounds. Although baseline assessments indicate children's achievements on entry to the school are wide ranging, the very small sample means it is not possible to make a reliable overall judgement. Thirty per cent of pupils are on the special needs register, two thirds of these pupils are on the higher stages requiring individual education plans, and one has a statement of needs.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Overall, this is an effective school that provides good value for money. The quality of teaching is good. In none of the subjects, where there was sufficient evidence, are standards below those expected for the pupils' ages. By the end of Key Stage 2 standards in English and science are above average and they are rising rapidly in information technology. The leadership of the school reflects the shared commitment of staff and governors to improvement.

What the school does well

- Teaching and the quality of pupils' learning are good.
- Literacy is taught effectively and pupils develop their skills well in other subjects.
- Teachers' good quality assessments and records are used well to plan pupils' work.
- Standards in information technology are rising quickly due to effective teaching and use of up-to-date equipment installed earlier this year.
- Pupils with special educational needs benefit from good quality support.
- The headteacher and staff work well as a team to ensure the curriculum is carefully planned.

What could be improved

- There are no major issues related to pupils' standards or the quality of teaching.
- However, the school should address a number of smaller issues, these include:
Improving the presentation of some pupils' work; increasing the range of investigative science for the most able Year 2 pupils; a greater encouragement of parental involvement in the life of the school and widening the range of extra curricular activities.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

When it was last inspected in March 1996, Brook Primary was found to be a good school. Since that time there have been many positive developments and it is well placed to sustain further improvement. All the action points from the last inspection have been tackled well. Improvements in the teaching of information technology and in pupils' understanding of the subject have been very good. Standards in science at Key Stage 2 have risen. Many strengths, including the good quality of teaching, have been maintained. Attainment has remained above average in English with improvements in reading standards.

STANDARDS

As only four pupils took the tests last year, and less than ten pupils in previous years, it is not possible to make valid comparisons with other schools. When test scores are aggregated over the past four years they indicate that pupils' results have been above the national average in English and science and average in mathematics. Only six pupils are taking the Key Stage 2 tests this year. As with past results the numbers are too small to make meaningful judgements about the targets set for this group's performance in the Year 2000 tests; the presence or absence of one pupil significantly distorts the figures. However, individual predictions are based on good quality assessment.

Standards are above average in English at both key stages and pupils' use of literacy across the curriculum is very good. In mathematics standards are above average at Key Stage 1 with nearly all pupils in Year 2 achieving national standards or above. At Key Stage 2 standards are broadly average but improving as the teaching of the numeracy strategy is becoming more effective. Attainment in science is average at Key Stage 1 and above average at Key Stage 2. Standards in information technology meet national expectations at both key stages. Pupils are making rapid progress using high quality equipment. Religious education meets the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. In the other subjects, where judgements were possible, pupils' standards are appropriate for their ages.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Nearly all pupils have positive attitudes to their work and are enthusiastic about school.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good or better in nine out of every ten lessons. The boisterous behaviour of a small minority of older pupils at break times sometimes detracts from the good behaviour of the majority.
Personal development and relationships	Satisfactory personal development. Relationships amongst pupils, and between pupils and adults, are good. Pupils often collaborate well on tasks and show respect for staff.
Attendance	A little below the national average for the last reporting year. However, the figures are distorted by the long-term illness of a pupil. There is little unauthorised absence.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

Of the teaching observed, 11 per cent was judged to be very good, 67 per cent good and 22 per cent satisfactory. No lessons were less than satisfactory. The two pupils under five at the time of the inspection, one part time, were taught in the Key Stage 1 class where the quality of teaching was judged to be good. Overall, the school meets the needs of all pupils. The quality of teaching was good in English. Literacy skills are very well taught across the curriculum. In mathematics, the teaching, including numeracy, was good at Key Stage 1 and satisfactory with good features at Key Stage 2. Here,

problem solving and work on measuring and shape are taught well. Teaching of the numeracy strategy is sound at this key stage; teachers are working hard to refine the numeracy strategy to the demands of the four year age group in the Key Stage 2 class. The teaching of information technology throughout the school, and science at Key Stage 2, is of a good quality. The main strengths in teaching are teachers' good knowledge of the curriculum, well-planned lessons and, apart from the standards of presentation of some older pupils, high expectations of what the pupils can achieve. Occasionally teachers speak too long in parts of lessons and pupils' pace of learning slows. Good quality informative marking and individual targets set with pupils help them to understand where they need to improve.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Well balanced, broad and carefully planned curriculum. Literacy very well established and developed across all subjects. Satisfactory introduction of the numeracy strategy. A narrow range of after school activities.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Overall provision is good. Individual education plans are relevant and regularly reviewed. Pupils receive effective support in lessons.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Satisfactory spiritual, moral and cultural development. Good social development. There is a good emphasis on shared and collaborative work. Older pupils are taught to care for younger ones.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very good procedures for assessment and the monitoring of pupils' progress. The information is used well to plan work. Good personal support for pupils. Satisfactory procedures for promoting good behaviour but the team point system is not valued by some older pupils. A few weaknesses in the supervision of pupils outside lessons. Not all staff have been trained in child protection procedures. Parents are kept well informed about their children's progress through meetings with teachers and good quality end of year reports. Parents are welcome in school but not enough is done to actively encourage them to help.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Effective leadership by the headteacher who works closely with the few other teachers to ensure decisions and changes are implemented. The management of the curriculum is allocated appropriately so that each member of staff has responsibility for a major area. The arrangements for the Key Stage 2 class which is shared by three teachers are carefully managed.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors fulfil all their duties. They are supportive of the school, are aware of its strengths and identify areas they feel could be improved. They make regular formal visits to the school and produce written reports of these for parents.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school has sound procedures. The headteacher and numeracy co-ordinator satisfactorily monitor and support teachers. School development planning is based on an evaluation of the previous year and sets target for improvements in standards. Yearly test results for each pupil are recorded and monitored in the core subjects to track individual and group performance.
The strategic use of resources	The school applies the principles of best value in careful financial planning. Spending has been correctly focused on national priorities of literacy, numeracy and information technology. There are appropriately qualified teachers and experienced support staff. Resources are good apart from in physical education where there is no room for gymnastic equipment. The main school building is attractive and there are good grounds for outdoor activities. The Key Stage 1 class is taught in a temporary building detached from the main school and the indoor facilities for physical education are poor.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The teaching is good. • Their children make good progress. • Teachers expect pupils to work hard and do their best. • Their concerns or problems are taken seriously by the school. • The improvement in facilities for information technology. • The correct values and attitudes are taught to the pupils. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The range of extra curricular activities. • The headteacher to be more active in approaching them, particularly in encouraging them to help at school. • The amount of homework set. • The school's accommodation, particularly for physical education. • A few issues regarding the supervision of pupils outside of lessons.

Inspectors agree with all the positive views of parents. The school participates in inter-school matches with other small schools and has had some specialist sports coaching. However, the range of extra-curricular activities currently on offer is narrow and the school is aiming to improve this. For example, governors have applied for funds to provide specialist musical and sporting clubs. The headteacher and staff are readily available to discuss parental concerns. Nevertheless, inspectors agree that the

headteacher needs to be more active in approaching parents, for example at the start and end of the school day, and encouraging them to take an active part in the daily life of the school. Parents' views on the amount of homework range from too much to not enough. The inspection findings show that the school introduced satisfactory arrangements for homework last September. The monitoring of homework by the headteacher is helpful in identifying and rectifying any inconsistencies. The accommodation for indoor physical education is poor, particularly for older pupils. Good use is made of the village hall as an alternative arrangement. However, there is little gymnastics equipment and lessons have to be cancelled when the weather is unsuitable for pupils to undertake the half mile walk. A few weaknesses regarding pupils' supervision in the playground were reported to the school and action is now being taken to remedy these.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. Results in National Curriculum assessments in any one year are unreliable indicators of pupils' attainment. Less than 10 pupils have entered the tests at either key stage and in 1999 there were just four pupils, all boys, in Year 6. Average results aggregated from the last four years indicate that pupils' overall scores at Key Stage 1 in reading, writing and mathematics were above average. At Key Stage 2 they were above average in English and science and average in mathematics.
2. As there are 10 pupils currently in Year 2, judgements about attainment have been made for the end of the key stage. As only six pupils are in the current Year 6, judgements about standards are based on the whole of Key Stage 2 with a focus on Year 5 upwards. In the subjects which are assessed nationally, inspection evidence shows that standards are above average in English at both key stages. They are above average in mathematics at the end of Key Stage 1. At Key Stage 2 they are sound but improving as teachers refine and adapt the numeracy strategy to the four-year age group in one class. In science standards are average at Key Stage 1 and above average at Key Stage 2. No significant differences were identified in the performance of girls and boys. Targets for Key Stage 2 test results in the Year 2000 are firmly based on good assessment records which show that the few pupils involved have made the progress predicted during Key Stage 2.
3. Only a very small number of children start the school each year. Although it is not possible to make a reliable judgement about overall attainment on entry, baseline information from the past two years shows it be wide ranging. Evidence from the work of the very small sample of children in the school indicates that by the time they are five most have or will have achieved the standards expected nationally.
4. Pupils' rate of learning is good in **English**. By the of Key Stage 1 pupils speak clearly and listen attentively. They write neat cursive script and understand some rules of grammar, including the correct use of full stops and capital letters. Pupils read unknown texts willingly and have several strategies for reading unfamiliar words, including using the meaning of the text and initial sounds. By the upper half of Key Stage 2 pupils regularly draft their written work. Handwriting is usually neat and joined. Spelling and punctuation are at an expected standard for the pupils' ages and are usually accurate. Many pupils write very interesting, long pieces of work, often in chapters. Pupils speak confidently and listen well to others. Pupils read fluently and express views on their favourite authors. Across the curriculum, pupils apply and extend their literacy skills very effectively.
5. Pupils make good progress in **mathematics** at Key Stage 1. They demonstrate quick mental arithmetic skills, are beginning to work successfully with simple division, and calculate correctly using hundreds. By the upper half of Key Stage 2 most pupils have sound mental arithmetic skills including a satisfactory recall of multiplication tables. Pupils develop good problem solving strategies including the use of approximation. Past work shows that pupils of average attainment have found some of the new

approaches to calculation introduced during numeracy lessons difficult to grasp and their rate of learning has slowed at times. However, standards are rising as the numeracy strategy is being successfully refined and adapted. Higher attaining pupils are challenged, particularly in shape and measure and data handling. Pupils make sound use of numeracy skills in other subjects.

6. Progress in **science** is sound at Key Stage 1. Pupils are taught a broad range of skills and knowledge but investigative work for the highest attainers in Year 2 is not always sufficiently challenging. At Key Stage 2 pupils' rate of learning is good. Pupils develop good levels of understanding and skills of investigation in all aspects of the subject.

7. Pupils make good progress in **information technology** at both key stages. They develop a wide range of skills and in some aspects of the subject exceed expectations for their ages, as shown in their work on spreadsheets in Year 3 and in multi media presentations in Year 5.

8. Pupils' attainment in **religious education** meets the requirements of the agreed syllabus at both key stages. Compared with the last inspection, good standards have been maintained in English and they have improved significantly in information technology and science. In all **other subjects**, where judgements are possible, sound standards have been maintained.

9. The standards of presentation in pupils' work are satisfactory overall but vary between subjects. They are good in history and much of the written English work. However, in science and mathematics, some pupils' work is of an untidy appearance, particularly the drawing of tables and charts.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

10. Pupils have good attitudes to their education. They are enthusiastic and keen to attend school. In lessons they show interest in their work and settle quickly to tasks. They listen when others are speaking, and are keen to share ideas. Older pupils collaborate well together and show some independence in their work. In a literacy lesson, pupils from Years 5 and 6 were fully involved, asking questions when they did not understand and using their dictionaries to look up unfamiliar words. Similarly, pupils from Year 2, completing an extended writing task, were keen to work and share ideas about their senses and feelings. Overall, pupils' interest and involvement are good, providing a solid foundation for learning and making progress.

11. Throughout the school behaviour is generally good. At no time during the inspection was oppressive behaviour seen, nor was any incident of bullying observed. A few parents referred to the misbehaviour of a small number of older pupils. Inspectors found that behaviour was usually good in lessons but there was some boisterous behaviour by a few older pupils in the playground at break and lunch times. Pupils say that the staff deal with any incidents of poor behaviour quickly and effectively. Movement around the school is calm and orderly, with pupils lining up to go into lessons or assembly. There have been no exclusions since the last inspection.

12. Relationships amongst pupils and between pupils and adults are good. When given the opportunity pupils are good at working with others. They are courteous, and show respect for teachers and for property. No litter was seen during the inspection and pupils treat equipment such as computers and books with care and respect.

13. Pupils' personal development is satisfactory. Staff provide positive role models and pupils generally respond to the respect they are shown. Older pupils are encouraged to look after younger ones, and from the youngest upward they have the confidence to read their work to others and express their views. Older pupils have responsibilities within the school, such as helping in the school office and clearing up the dining room. While they acknowledged that they feel valued in the school, they also expressed some minor resentment at losing some of their free time in carrying out these jobs.

14. The attendance rate in the 1998/99 academic year was below the national average, owing to the long-term sickness of one pupil, which accounted for over one third of the absences, and the irregular attendance by two others. Attendance levels this year have shown an improvement and so far are in line with the national average. There is little unauthorised absence. Registration sessions are brisk and efficient, and lessons begin and end on time.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

15. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. It ranges from satisfactory to very good. Good teaching was spread evenly through both key stages and for the very few pupils who were under five at the time of the inspection. Very good teaching occurred at Key Stage 2 in information technology. The good quality of teaching has been maintained since the last inspection. In the lessons observed the teaching of literacy was good overall. Numeracy teaching was good at Key Stage 1 and sound, with good features at Key Stage 2. Pupils with special educational needs are taught effectively and they make good progress. Work is planned well, taking account of the needs of the individual child.

16. Very good teaching and learning were characterised by challenging activities underpinned by the teacher's good knowledge and understanding of the subject. This was evident in a Year 3/4 information technology lesson where all elements of the lesson were challenging. The teacher continually monitored and assessed pupils and understood how to challenge the highest attainers, for example by asking them to create a formula for averages using a spreadsheet. Careful grouping ensured that pupils were mutually supportive and learnt from each other.

17. Overall, teachers' good understanding of the curriculum results in pupils acquiring a wide range of skills and knowledge. In most lessons seen teachers demonstrated a very good understanding of teaching literacy and a sound knowledge of the numeracy strategy. Teachers' planning is good. Teachers outline the structure of lessons, often give timings for each section and clearly indicate the work planned for different groups. This is helpful in promoting well-organised lessons and for guiding the pace of learning. Learning objectives are always clear and shared with pupils. In addition, at Key Stage 2 they are displayed on the classroom boards and often included in the work, for example on maths work sheets.

18. Overall, teachers have high expectations of pupils. They expect them to work hard and this is reflected in their effort and the generally large amount of work pupils produce. Teachers usually prepare work that is well matched to different levels of attainment. Carefully focused questioning enhances this. For example, in a Key Stage 1 mental arithmetic session, the teacher challenged all pupils with a good balance of class and individual questioning. In a minority of instances there is a mismatch between work and pupils' attainment. Past numeracy work at Key Stage 2 shows that, on occasions, tasks have been easy or too hard for some pupils, and experimental science in Year 2 does not always challenge the highest attaining pupils.

19. Teaching methods are effective. Lessons usually have a good balance of introduction, group or individual work and a session at the end to share and recap on learning. Teachers' introductions to lessons often engage pupils' interest. This was evident in a Key Stage 2 literacy lesson where the teacher used humour well to enliven the teaching of similes. Pupils are given good opportunities to work collaboratively and exercise creativity and independence. For example, in a history lesson pupils worked in small groups to imagine what would be changed if they were transported back to Victorian times. The resulting writing, which many read to the class, was creative and based well on the historical knowledge pupils had acquired during previous lessons.

20. Pupils are managed with effective discipline in nearly all lessons; consequently they work hard and concentrate. Teachers' voices were never raised during the inspection and a calm learning atmosphere

prevailed, underpinned by the good relationships between adults and pupils. Learning resources are prepared well by teachers and used effectively. This ensures no time is wasted as everything is to hand and ready for the pupils. Most lessons are taught at a good pace which keeps pupils interested and active. In a few lessons, teachers speak for too long and pupils' rate of learning consequently slows. For example, in a numeracy lesson a group was kept too long sitting on the carpet participating in oral work and found it difficult to maintain their attention during the final session of the lesson. The teaching and learning of indoor physical education are restricted by the lack of space and poor facilities for gymnastic equipment.

21. Teachers provide good ongoing support in lessons. They are skilful at assessing difficulties as they move between groups and individuals, and give effective support. The quality of marking is good. At Key Stage 1, work is often marked alongside pupils to ensure that they have learnt from their mistakes. At Key Stage 2, helpful, conscientious marking acknowledges pupils' efforts and gives useful advice on how pupils can improve or correct their work. Satisfactory use is made of homework to support pupils' learning. A formal system of homework in line with government guidance was introduced last September. This is being closely monitored by the headteacher to ensure that the work set is consistent and suitable.

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

22. The curriculum provided by the school meets statutory requirements. Satisfactory arrangements are made for the few pupils under five. Work is planned separately and the children are supported well by a learning assistant for numeracy and literacy. Apart from physical education, where the accommodation restricts the range of indoor work, pupils at Key Stages 1 and 2 have access to a broad range of learning opportunities. The curriculum is relevant to the pupils, with meaningful connections made between subjects. For example, work in history is linked to literacy, religious education and information technology. Planning is thorough in all subjects and overall, meets the needs of pupils of all levels of attainment. The headteacher and staff work very well together to ensure the curriculum is carefully planned. Teachers in the shared class have clearly identified responsibilities for subjects.

23. The school's strategy for literacy is very effective. A particularly strong feature is the teaching of literacy skills across the curriculum. There is good attention to technical vocabulary in subjects such as science and pupils learn to write in a range of ways. For example, work on life in Victorian times combines factual and imaginative writing and plays are written in religious education lessons. Good spelling and grammar are encouraged in all subjects. The introduction of the numeracy strategy is satisfactory. The strategy is "bedding down" in the Key Stage 2 class where teachers are working hard, constantly reviewing and adapting work to ensure it matches the needs of all abilities in the four year groups. Satisfactory opportunities to develop numeracy skills are planned in other subjects.

24. There is good provision for pupils with special educational needs. Individual education plans are relevant with achievable targets. Reviews are regular and involve the Special Needs Co-ordinator, the class teacher and parents where possible. Pupils are involved in reviewing and setting new targets. This helps them to have a good knowledge of their own learning.

25. There is a narrow range of extra-curricular activities. Football takes place in the winter and a netball club is provided when sufficient pupils are interested. A multi-sports club is run during the summer by staff from a local leisure centre. Governors are seeking ways of extending opportunities using outside expertise, particularly for sport and music.

26. Pupils have equal access to all areas of the curriculum. Teachers positively promote equal opportunity. For example, during a literacy lesson, pupils at Key Stage 2 were encouraged to think of providing the differing needs of children in an after school club, including wheelchair access and different diets. Personal, social and health education, including the dangers of substance misuse, is appropriately taught through science and some “circle time” activities.

27. There are satisfactory links with the community to support learning. Pupils make local studies, enter village competitions and visit places of interest. Useful links with a nearby school include a shared residential visit.

28. The school makes satisfactory provision for pupils’ spiritual development. In religious education pupils are encouraged to think about how people feel in certain circumstances such as Judas when he betrayed Jesus. Assemblies are planned to give a balance of topics and include appropriate opportunities for reflection. Provision for pupils’ moral development is satisfactory. The behaviour code is discussed with pupils who are taught right from wrong. They are encouraged to consider those less fortunate than themselves, and have raised money for such good causes as the Ashford Hospice. During assemblies pupils discuss moral dilemmas such as those related to friendship. Appreciation of others’ efforts is encouraged through the weekly sharing assembly.

29. Pupils’ social development is good. They are encouraged to mix well with each other. There is a good emphasis on shared and collaborative work in different sized, often mixed gender groups. Adults set a good example in their positive relationships with each other and their pupils. The older pupils are taught to care for the younger ones and help them settle into school. Provision for pupils’ cultural development is satisfactory. Pupils are presented with positive images of other cultures in literature. They explore poems from other countries, study other cultures such as those in the Caribbean and learn about Sikhism and Judaism. Pupils’ annual performances at the village hall include drama and music. Visits from theatre companies and educational visits to places of historical interest, such as the White Cliffs Museum, also contribute to pupils’ cultural development.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

30. The school provides good educational and personal support, and guidance for pupils. Staff know pupils well and help them to develop positive attitudes to learning in an atmosphere where they are treated with respect, and valued individually for their personal qualities. This helps them to enjoy school life.

31. Assessment procedures and teachers’ record keeping for both academic progress and personal development are of a high quality. Pupils are regularly tested in English, mathematics, science and some foundation subjects. In other subjects teachers record their judgements from their own day to day assessment. Teachers’ records clearly identify pupils’ strengths and weaknesses. The information is used well to identify the more able pupils who need extra challenge. For example, in an information technology lesson the teacher knew which pupils were ready for higher level work in their multi-media presentations. Procedures for assessing pupils with special educational needs are good. Individual education plans are regularly reviewed and appropriate help provided either in class or in small groups by a teacher or a learning support assistant. For all pupils, samples of work, dating back to their time in reception, are collated and assigned a national curriculum level. This builds up an excellent picture of progress and achievements. Baseline test results and those from optional and end of key stage National Curriculum tests have been recorded during the past two years and provide useful information for

tracking progress and evaluating the success of the school. There are no clear procedures for identifying those pupils with specific gifts or talents. At Key Stage 2 pupils are involved in setting and reviewing their own personal and academic targets. These are attached to pupils' desks to help them remember and review their own progress. Pupils contribute to their annual reports through writing about and evaluating their own performance and successes during the year. This is very good practice.

32. Procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour are satisfactory. Whilst there is a clear system of rewards of team points for good behaviour, this is not valued by older pupils who feel that it is inconsistently implemented across the school. A number of parents endorsed this view. Good behaviour and attitudes are promoted in assemblies and in "Circle Time" sessions. There is appropriate use of praise and reinforcement of positive attitudes in classes, which supports pupils well and encourages a positive learning ethos. The school takes a strong line on bullying; pupils report that there are very few incidents of bullying and that any reported concerns are taken seriously, involving parents when necessary.

33. Procedures to monitor and promote good attendance are satisfactory. Records for attendance are properly maintained and comply with statutory requirements. Unexplained absences are followed up, resulting in low recorded unauthorised absence.

34. Procedures for child protection are satisfactory; there is a named co-ordinator and a clear policy. However, not all staff have received training to help them in identifying any concerns, beyond using their common sense. The governors, who carry out appropriate checks and risk assessments, monitor health and safety issues. Issues related to the level of pupils' supervision outside lessons have been reported to the headteacher and governors.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

35. Overall, parents are satisfied with the work of the school and the school has satisfactory links with them. Most parents are happy with the quality of teaching and feel their children make good progress. Almost a quarter of parents who responded to the questionnaire, however, do not feel that the school works closely enough with them and they are not encouraged to participate in school. Many would appreciate further meetings to discuss the numeracy and literacy strategies. The Friends of Brook School, organised by parents, actively raises money for resources, school trips and other valuable "extras" such as free sports tuition in the summer term. At present there are no parent helpers in the school, and several parents feel the school should be more active in seeking their help and involvement in school life. Most parents take an active interest in their children's education through giving support for homework tasks and listening to reading at home. A significant number of parents expressed dissatisfaction with the school's range of extra-curricular activities.

36. The quality of information provided for parents, both about the school and the progress of their children, is good. The prospectus and governors' annual report to parents are well presented and give a clear picture of school life. Annual reports are detailed and personal to each child. They give information about the work that has been covered, specific comments on pupils' strengths and weaknesses and precise information on pupils' attainment against national standards. They also include a section, written by pupils themselves, evaluating their own successes during the academic year. Newsletters are regular and informative, but a few parents feel they are not given sufficient reminders about forthcoming events. Parental consultation evenings are held each term. Parents value these regular opportunities to discuss their children's work, and they appreciate the school's 'Open Door' policy where they are encouraged to approach the school with any concerns. Most parents feel comfortable about contacting the school with questions or a problem, although a few stated that they would value the presence of the headteacher in the playground before or after school to enable them to discuss issues informally.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

37. As in the previous inspection the leadership and management of the school are successful in enabling pupils to attain good standards. A positive learning environment has been sustained where pupils are expected to work hard and achieve their best.

38. The headteacher provides effective leadership. An appropriate style of shared decision making has been established. This is helpful in ensuring the curriculum is well planned and there is continuity in pupils' learning. All staff have management responsibilities with the major areas of literacy and numeracy appropriately led by the two full time teachers. Special needs provision is managed well. The co-ordinator works closely with class teachers to formulate and monitor individual education plans. Teaching arrangements are very well managed in the shared Key Stage 2 class. For example, the three teachers focus on different subjects, or aspects of subjects as in mathematics. A good feature at both key stages is the staffing arrangements which enable "half classes" to be taught well in the computer room.

39. Issues from the last inspection have been addressed well and, overall, good standards have been sustained. The targets for the school are clearly stated in the school development plan and appropriately reflect national priorities for literacy, numeracy and information technology. There is a shared determination to improve the quality of education. A clear educational direction includes, in the short term, further development of the numeracy strategy, the introduction of "Curriculum 2000" and, in the long term, improvement in the accommodation of the school, particularly for indoor physical education. The school's mission statement and aims are reflected in its work.

40. Overall, the school is self-evaluative and takes appropriate action to remedy weaknesses. For example, those in information technology have been very successfully resolved and weaknesses identified in pupils' writing have been addressed through additional lessons on extended writing. Specialist advice has been sought to build on recent improvements in the numeracy strategy in the Key Stage 2 class. Within the constraints and demands of a very small school, the monitoring and evaluation of teaching is satisfactory. The headteacher observes teachers once a term and produces written reports which are discussed with teachers. Although this is good practice, with reports containing points for improvement, much of the observations tend to be descriptive rather than evaluative. The headteacher monitors each pupil's results in yearly statutory and non-statutory national curriculum tests. These records give useful information on individual and group performance. The appraisal of teachers meets requirements; it includes lesson observation and the setting of targets. Appropriate arrangements for the induction of recent new staff include familiarisation with the school by working with groups of pupils prior to teaching a whole class.

41. The governing body fulfils its statutory duties. Governors are aware of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and take some action in rectifying them. For instance, they are applying for external funding to help widen the range of extra curricular activities. In their discussions with inspectors they identified other areas they are keen to improve, for instance strengthening the links with parents. Regular contact with the school, which includes observations of lessons, enables governors to ask relevant questions about what they see and to act as critical friends. A good feature is the sending to parents of governors' written reports following their formal visits to the school. Governors are fully involved in setting and agreeing priorities and plans for the school's development.

42. The school's financial planning is good. Money has been correctly focused on priorities identified in the school development plan and in line with national initiatives. The headteacher and governors carefully monitor the budget and a small but prudent surplus is maintained every year. The school "shops around" to find the best deal for services and goods. The day-to-day administration of the school

is efficient and all records are computerised. Funding for special educational needs is used effectively and the grant for information technology has paid for good quality training and resources.

43. Bearing in mind the very small size of the school, there is a good match of teaching expertise to the demands of the curriculum. Experienced support staff work effectively with teachers. Overall the range and quantity of resources are good. The school benefits from a playing field and an attractive old school building set in peaceful surroundings. However, the Key Stage 1 class is taught in rather cramped temporary accommodation. Another temporary building serves as a dining room, assembly hall and further teaching area. It is also used for physical education at Key Stage 1 but activities are very restricted in the space. The room is too small for Key Stage 2 pupils who consequently need to walk approximately half a mile to the village hall. Although space is adequate for them, there is little gymnastic equipment. This situation is unsatisfactory, particularly when, as occurred during the inspection, lessons have to be cancelled because of poor weather.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

44. There are no key issues related to standards or teaching. In order to rectify other weaknesses identified in the inspection the governing body, headteacher and staff should consider the following points for inclusion in their action plan:

- Reviewing and improving the arrangements for the supervision of pupils at break-times, lunch-times and before and after school. (see paragraph 34)
- Providing more opportunities for the most able Year 2 pupils to learn higher levels of investigative science. (see paragraph 62)
- Building on pupils’ sound progress in mathematics at Key Stage 2 by continuing to modify and adapt the numeracy strategy. (see paragraphs 57, 60)
- Ensuring all new staff receive training in child protection issues as soon as possible. (see paragraph 34)
- Improving the presentation of pupils’ work in mathematics and science. (see paragraphs 58 and 63)
- The headteacher being more active in encouraging parents to become involved in the work of the school. (see paragraphs 35, 36)
- Widening the range of extra curricular activities. (see paragraphs 25, 35, 76)
- Improving procedures for identifying gifted and talented pupils. (see paragraph 31)
- Governors continuing to use their best endeavours to secure improvements in the accommodation, particularly for indoor physical education. (see paragraphs 43, 77)
- Reviewing and modifying the “team point” system to ensure that it is applied consistently and valued by all pupils. (see paragraph 32)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	18
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	16

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
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0	11	67	22	0	0	0
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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)		48.5
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals		3

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR- 6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs		1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register		14

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	1
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	4

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	6.9
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.1
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2

Data regarding the school's performance in National Tests is not reliable because of the very small number of pupils taking the tests in Year 2 and Year 6.

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	
Black – African heritage	
Black – other	
Indian	

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	
Bangladeshi	
Chinese	
White	47
Any other minority ethnic group	

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	2.9
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	17
Average class size	24

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	34

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.

Financial information

Financial year	1998/99
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	£
Total income	111363
Total expenditure	109392
Expenditure per pupil	2379
Balance brought forward from previous year	3403
Balance carried forward to next year	5374

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	49
Number of questionnaires returned	24

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	63	29	4	4	0
My child is making good progress in school.	50	42	4	4	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	42	46	12	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	25	50	21	4	0
The teaching is good.	50	46	0	4	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	29	54	13	4	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	58	34	4	4	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	58	34	4	4	0
The school works closely with parents.	25	50	17	8	0
The school is well led and managed.	48	35	9	4	4
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	50	38	4	4	4
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	8	17	42	29	4

Other issues raised by parents

More meetings would be helpful in increasing parents' understanding of the numeracy and literacy strategies.

A range of views was expressed on the links the school has with the local community.

The behaviour of a small group of older pupils, which was felt to be unsatisfactory at times.

The poor accommodation for indoor physical education.

The team point system, which a few parents felt was not applied fairly.

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

45. Appropriate arrangements are made for the very few children aged under five. The children usually begin in the Key Stage 1 class on a part-time basis the term before or at the start of the term that they are five years old. Indications of standards are based on one full-time and one part-time child under five and four others in the reception group who have reached the age of five. These children have met or are likely to meet the standards expected at age five.

46. The children become increasingly independent, learning to take turns and share fairly. They choose activities and resources for themselves with confidence. The children write their names correctly and learn letter names and sounds, developing early reading skills appropriately. They are confident speakers and listen attentively during story and register times. The use of mathematical language is encouraged and the children count confidently to ten and beyond.

47. The children learn about their growing world. They are taught to make good use of their senses, for example in guessing different smells of food or identifying mystery objects by touch. Good use of resources means that the children develop early technology skills well and many are confident when using the computer. Physical skills are promoted within the constraints of the school building, but there is no space for indoor equipment to develop the children's climbing and balancing skills. Creative development is promoted effectively, for example in art children experiment with paints to create a rainbow or make "fish" collages.

48. The children under five are taught within the Key Stage 1 class where the overall quality of teaching is good. Separate planning is used to guide the work of a classroom assistant who works with these children during the morning sessions. An effective partnership has been established with the class teacher during lessons.

ENGLISH

49. Pupils at both key stages attain standards that are above those expected nationally. Good standards have been maintained since the last inspection with improvements in reading. Pupils of all levels of attainment make good progress. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported in lessons and they make good progress towards their targets.

50. By the end of Key Stage 1 nearly all pupils are attaining national standards or above. Pupils speak clearly to a variety of audiences and listen attentively, making appropriate responses. By the end of the key stage pupils write neat cursive script and understand some rules of grammar, including the correct use of full stops and capital letters. They write poetry and stories using a good range of vocabulary. Pupils know how to draft work and use the computer competently as a tool for doing this. They read unknown texts willingly and have several strategies for reading unfamiliar words, including using the meaning of the text and initial sounds. Basic spellings are usually correct.

51. By the upper half of Key Stage 2 pupils regularly draft their written work and produce neat finished articles, sometimes using a publishing programme on the computer. Handwriting is usually neat and joined. Spelling and punctuation are at an expected standard for the pupils' ages and are usually accurate. Most older pupils correct their own spelling using a dictionary. Higher attaining pupils use a wide range of punctuation correctly including speech marks. Many pupils write very interesting stories and produce long pieces of work, some of which are written in chapters. During lessons and assemblies

the pupils speak confidently and clearly and listen well to the views of others. Pupils read fluently and usually with expression. They discuss their reading books and express their views on their favourite authors. Pupils research topics well using reference books, such as on the Victorians, and present their work neatly.

52. The quality of teaching and learning in English is good at both key stages. Teachers have good subject knowledge and encourage the pupils to learn systematically. Work is carefully prepared based on pupils' current achievements. Very good ongoing assessment and detailed records underpin teachers' good quality planning. Teachers provide a wide range of texts and have high expectations of pupils' achievements. They expect pupils to work hard; consequently pupils apply themselves productively to tasks. Lessons are usually well balanced with clear explanations, a good variety of group work and a session at the end to share learning. Lessons begin with clear learning objectives explained to pupils. This is very helpful in giving pupils a clear understanding of what they are learning and why. Occasionally, the introductions or "plenary" sessions are too long and pupils start to lose interest. Teachers' enthusiasm for literacy is reflected in pupils' enjoyment and pride in their work. Teachers' marking is of a high quality. Mistakes are corrected, good work commented on, including any progress made, and small targets are set for future improvement. At Key Stage 2, pupils' overall targets in English are displayed on their desks. These are relevant, drawn up in conjunction with the pupils and reviewed regularly. Sound use is made of homework to support pupils' learning.

53. The literacy strategy has been very successfully implemented. The teaching of literacy across the curriculum is particularly strong. Pupils are encouraged to apply their skills and knowledge when writing in all subjects and produce work of a high standard. For example, in science pupils produce glossaries of technical vocabulary and in religious education they write and perform plays based on the story of Zaccheus.

54. The subject is well managed. English lessons and planning have been carefully monitored to ensure they are of a consistently good standard. The monitoring of pupils' progress and the school's performance in the subject is very effective. Records include annotated and assessed examples of pupils' work from when they started school, and results of various tests which are used well for target setting. Weaknesses in pupils' writing, identified during the past few years, have been effectively addressed through the literacy strategy and extended writing sessions at both key stages. Overall, literacy planning for the mixed year classes is good as it reflects the needs of pupils of different abilities and ages. The literacy strategy has been well resourced and there are sufficient non-fiction books.

MATHEMATICS

55. For pupils currently at the end of Key Stage 1, attainment is above average with nearly all pupils attaining national standards or above. At Key Stage 2, attainment is broadly average but improving as teachers adapt and refine the numeracy strategy to the four-year age group in one class. Standards are similar to those reported in the last inspection. Overall, the numeracy strategy has been satisfactorily implemented.

56. Pupils of all levels of attainment, including those with special educational needs, make good progress at Key Stage 1. They demonstrate quick mental arithmetic skills. Year 2 pupils mentally add 11 on to 27, know that 3×5 is 15 and higher attainers correctly double numbers such as 19. Past work shows that during Year 2 they gain an understanding of multiplication, for instance, by showing that 2×9 is the same as 9×2 . Pupils are beginning to work successfully with simple division and calculate correctly using hundreds. The quality of teaching and learning is good at this key stage. Higher-attaining pupils are challenged. For example, in one lesson they were required to draw their own axes for a pictogram and transfer information from a table of results where one symbol represented ten

objects. Lower attaining pupils receive good support with carefully directed questioning and encouragement. The pace of lessons is good and keeps pupils enthusiastically involved.

57. At Key Stage 2 pupils make sound progress in most aspects of numeracy and good progress in measure and data handling. Standards are rising as the numeracy strategy is being successfully refined and adapted. By the upper half of the key stage most have sound mental arithmetic skills including a satisfactory recall of multiplication tables. Pupils develop good problem solving strategies including the use of approximation and different methods of calculation to check their answers. Pupils of average attainment have found some of the new approaches to calculation, introduced during numeracy lessons, difficult to grasp and past work shows that their rate of learning has slowed at times. Higher-attaining pupils are challenged, particularly in shape and measure where they calculate missing angles in two-dimensional shapes, and in data handling where they work out likely events on a scale of probability. Pupils with special education needs make good progress, especially when well supported by classroom assistants.

58. The quality of teaching and learning in numeracy is sound, with good aspects at Key Stage 2. Good features include the sharing of learning objectives with pupils. These are explained to the class, written on the board and are usually on the pupils' work sheets. This, coupled with good quality marking, gives the pupils a good understanding of their learning. Teachers' planning is of a good quality with appropriate activities and outcomes planned for the different levels of attainment in the four year groups. However, the tasks and approaches selected from the numeracy strategy have on occasions been too difficult for some pupils. This is reflected in the pupils' comparative lack of enthusiasm for mathematics compared with other subjects. Teachers are working hard to adapt the strategy to the demands of four year groups in one class and are continually adjusting their teaching after evaluating the success of lessons. Occasionally, groups of pupils are required to listen to teachers for too long, consequently their concentration reduces and their rate of learning slows. Not enough attention is paid to the presentation of pupils' work, which in some cases is of an untidy appearance with carelessly drawn charts and diagrams.

59. Pupils apply and use numeracy skills satisfactorily in other subjects. For example, they use scale in geography, accurately measure in design and technology and use angles in reflection experiments. Good use is made of information technology. Work on spreadsheets using formulae, data handling and the programming of floor and screen "turtles" involving estimation of distance and angles, contributes to mathematical understanding. An ongoing numeracy program which pupils work on individually is particularly helpful as it assesses pupils' competence and, when appropriate, provides activities to promote learning at the next level.

60. The subject is well managed, with a commitment to raising pupils' rate of progress to the good levels achieved in literacy. The school's self evaluation, including lesson observations and the monitoring of pupils' performance, has provided useful information on the subject's strengths and weaknesses. The expertise of a local advisor has been sought to further develop the implementation of the numeracy strategy in the Key Stage 2 class. Assessment procedures are very good. They include a profile of pupils' progress since joining the school, regular tests and clear ongoing records. These are used very well to group pupils, plan work and set targets in tests. Resources are good and support a broad range of learning opportunities.

SCIENCE

61. Standards of work at the end of Key Stage 1 are average. Work throughout Key Stage 2 indicates that standards are above average overall. Attainment is higher at Key Stage 2 than in the last inspection.

62. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress at Key Stage 1. They gain a sound knowledge of each aspect of the subject with an appropriate emphasis on recording their work, for example, in classifying different types of insects in charts, or drawing simple diagrams of how different numbers of bulbs work in a circuit. As they get older pupils are encouraged to write their responses in more detail, for example when identifying different sources of sound or using their senses to identify “mystery” objects. Teaching and learning are sound at this key stage. However, the most able Year 2 pupils are not always given higher levels of investigative work to challenge their thinking, for example by fair testing or by developing more complex ways of recording their work.

63. At Key Stage 2 pupils of all levels of attainment make good progress. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Teachers’ expectations are high and the work is challenging. There is a good emphasis on investigative skills. The most able pupils in the upper part of the key stage take responsibility for organising their investigations. During a lesson on light they independently planned and recorded their “mirror reflections” making their own chart for recording various angles and tabulating their results. Experimental work is supported very well by information technology. For example, pupils use light or heat sensors, apply their knowledge of spreadsheets to investigate relationships between times of the day and lengths of shadows and research information from an environmental web site. In other aspects of the subject pupils achieve well for their ages. A good feature of lessons is the variety of practical work which is carefully prepared by teachers to build well on what pupils already know. For example, by the end of Year 4, pupils show an understanding of the relationship between vibrations and the pitch of sound, whilst the most able older pupils extend this understanding to speculate how echo location works. Work on different electrical circuits undertaken in the lower half of the key stage is extended by older pupils to work out the relationship between the speed of a motor and different “resistors” in a circuit. Pupils work productively in science and many state that it is one of their favourite lessons. However, there is not enough emphasis on the presentation of pupils’ work at Key Stage 2, consequently some work is of an untidy appearance and many pupils do not take enough care when drawing diagrams and tables.

64. The subject is well managed jointly by the teachers and overseen by the headteacher. The curriculum is well planned on a two-year cycle to ensure a balanced coverage of topics. Topics are taught simultaneously at both key stages so pupils can share learning, for example at special whole-school assemblies. Literacy skills are very well used and applied in the subject. Specialist vocabulary is taught well. For example pupils produce their own glossary of “light” words and before one practical activity the teacher explained the derivation of the word “symmetry”. Pupils learn to write independently in the format of a scientific report. Sound use is made of numeracy skills including the measurement of temperature and angles. Teachers’ recording of pupils’ progress and assessment procedures in the subject are very good. Profiles of levelled work build up a good picture of pupils’ progress. Half-termly tests and ongoing records identify strengths and weaknesses in learning and provide very useful information for planning future work. Good quality marking and pupils’ self-assessment at Key Stage 2 help them to understand how well they are learning and where they can improve. Resources are good and used well to provide a range of activities.

In many of the foundation subjects too few lessons were observed to make overall judgements about teaching and some other aspects. Reference is made to past work, where available, to assist in making judgements and, where appropriate, strengths and weaknesses of the lessons seen are referred to. Planning is good in all subjects and includes a balanced range of activities. Most subjects are based on a two-year cycle of topics.

ART

65. Evidence from samples of past work at Key Stage 1 indicates that standards are similar to those expected for the pupils’ ages. Pupils produce careful close observational drawings of plants and

musical instruments. They mix colours well to make various shades of green. There is not enough evidence at Key Stage 2 to make a judgement about standards. Pupils' designs of badges depicting what they want to do when they leave school are imaginative and show good attention to detail. Information technology is used well as a resource in art, for example, to produce symmetrical pictures or for designing posters and folder covers.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

66. From the work seen at both key stages pupils attain standards that are appropriate for their ages. In a lesson at Key Stage 1 nearly all pupils successfully made a vehicle to carry 20 cubes. They were guided by their own designs, which included lists of materials and tools. Pupils were helped to think about and resolve their own problems by good teacher intervention, which included questions such as "Why?" and "What do you need to do?" No lessons were seen at Key Stage 2 but many of the photograph frames on display are of good quality. They are accompanied by carefully written evaluations by the pupils. Teachers' comments are very useful and include judgements about the quality of designs and how well the products fulfil their purpose. Design work in books reflects an appropriate range of activities including package designs and food technology.

GEOGRAPHY

67. Evidence from past work indicates that standards are similar to those expected for the pupils' ages. At Key Stage 1 pupils compare different locations, for example St. Lucia and Ashford. They develop sound skills in map making including recording their journey to school. At Key Stage 2 pupils' work is extended to compare different types of settlements, including features of the Caribbean. Their work includes local studies of such features as nearby streams. Information is presented in different forms, including graphs which support learning in numeracy.

68. Information technology is used well at both key stages. For example, at Key Stage 1 pupils design folder covers with information about St. Lucia, and at Key Stage 2 they use the Internet to investigate a river. Pupils' factual writing at both key stages and other activities, such as the writing of a glossary of relevant words, supports their literacy development.

HISTORY

69. Past work indicates that pupils' standards are those expected for their ages. At Key Stage 1 pupils relate the passing of time to their own lives with personal time-lines. They learn about schools now, compared with the past. Pupils know the importance of the lives of some famous historical characters including Louis Braille and Florence Nightingale.

70. The subject has strong links with literacy, particularly at Key Stage 2. For example, in the lesson seen, pupils shared text about Victorian times from a "big book" and related the lessons theme to the literacy text they are studying on "Tom's Midnight Garden". The teacher caught pupils' imaginations by quietly explaining how "everything goes misty" before passing back in time. Pupils collaborated well in groups to produce some imaginative writing based on their knowledge of Victorian historical facts. The curriculum is enriched by visits to places of historical interest, including the local agricultural museum and The White Cliffs Experience. The recent Victorian Day provided all pupils with a valuable learning experience and enhanced their understanding of life during those times. Information technology is used well for research purposes. In addition, older pupils have produced a very good multi-media slide show of the Victorian Day.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

71. Standards in information technology meet national expectations at the end of both key stages. Very effective teaching in the new computer room, installed eight months ago, is enabling pupils to make rapid progress. Standards and provision in the subject have significantly improved since the last inspection.

72. Pupils' achievements are good. At Key Stage 1 they use computers to support their work in a variety of ways. These include entering data into simple databases and independently printing out different charts of results, giving a floor robot a sequence of instructions to move in a pre determined way, writing poems using the word processing facility and combining pictures with text for their book covers on St. Lucia. By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils confidently use computers for a wide range of purposes. Teacher's expectations are high. Consequently, in a few aspects of the subject younger pupils at Key Stage 2 are displaying levels of competence above those expected for their ages, laying the foundations for high standards in the future. For example, pupils in Years 3 and 4 use spreadsheets to record information in a mathematical investigation about sweets. They locate the figures in the "cells" of the spreadsheet and enter formulae to calculate totals. Higher-attaining pupils work out averages using these facilities.

73. Overall, the quality of teaching and learning are good. Direct teaching in the computer room is good and often very good. In these effective lessons teachers have clear learning objectives, based on a good knowledge and understanding of the subject. They plan lessons to ensure that the less able pupils are supported well and highest attaining pupils are challenged. For example, a group of able Year 5 pupils were successfully taught to produce a multi-media presentation about the school's Victorian Day, using slides taken with the school's digital camera. They combined text and music with interesting "transitions" and "hyperlink" connections between each slide. Teachers ensure computers are used effectively in most lessons and subjects. This includes science where light sensors are used by older pupils in their experimental work to prove that light travels in straight lines. The subject supports numeracy and literacy well. Pupils learn a range of specialist vocabulary, find information for research on the Internet and use computers to draft and write in different styles. A good feature is the ongoing numeracy programme where pupils work at their own level and are continually assessed before moving on to new learning. Occasionally, pupils are not monitored regularly enough when working independently in the computer area and their progress slows when they are unsure of their tasks. Overall, pupils work enthusiastically and have developed positive attitudes to information technology. This was evident in their discussions with inspectors. For example, one pupil without a computer at home, now confidently uses the computer in the local library.

74. The subject is very well managed to ensure pupils have good learning opportunities. Extra support from the headteacher during lessons in the Key Stage 2 class enables the pupils to be taught in two small groups. A good balanced curriculum is taught to the required levels. This includes data handling where older pupils find out about birds by entering correctly framed questions to classify information, and control technology where pupils write sequences of instructions to control model traffic lights or to draw geometrical shapes on the screen. Assessment procedures and teachers' record keeping are very good. They are cross-referenced to the latest government guidance and give clear information about the levels pupils are achieving. The procedures are very useful in helping to plan the curriculum and for identifying individual strengths and weaknesses. Overall, resources are good. The well-equipped computer room is used effectively and some of the older machines in the classroom are used to support learning when appropriate.

MUSIC

75. In the one lesson observed, at Key Stage 1 pupils made good progress in their understanding of low and high notes. They used voices and instruments in unison following simple musical directions from pupils acting as “conductors”. By the end of the session pupils showed that they understood “crescendo” and “forte” by identifying them in music by Rachmaninov and Bjork. Most pupils sing enthusiastically and in tune during assemblies. Pupils use information technology facilities well for their own compositions.

76. Pupils have appropriate opportunities to perform in summer and Christmas concerts, and join others from local small schools for a musical afternoon. Paid individual musical tuition is available for those pupils interested. However, there are currently no extra curricular activities for music.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

77. In the one lesson observed, at Key Stage 1, pupils knew the importance of warming up before physical activity and competently performed a range of jumps including “star” and “tuck”. In this aspect of the subject their skills were similar to those expected for their ages. There is not enough evidence to compare standards with those in the last inspection. However, the poor indoor facilities for the subject are the same as reported then. Key Stage 1 pupils use a “mobile” classroom where it is not possible for them to extend their gymnastic skills. There is no large gymnastic apparatus, and a lack of space, further reduced by the need to store tables and chairs when the area is used for dining, restricts teaching and the pace of learning. For example, in parts of the lesson observed, half the pupils had to observe to make space for others combining sequences of jumps. The room is too small for Key Stage 2 pupils who use the village hall approximately half a mile away. This provides sufficient space with benches and mats but no other gymnastics equipment. When the weather is too poor to walk into the village, as occurred during the inspection, the physical education lesson has to be cancelled. The outdoor facilities are satisfactory and include a field for games.

78. The school makes good use of a nearby Sports’ Centre for swimming during the autumn term. A short residential visit provides a good opportunity for pupils to work with another school on various outdoor pursuits. Although the range of regular extra-curricular sport is narrow, pupils enjoy after school coaching during the summer term provided by the sports centre. Funding by the Friends’ Association ensures that all pupils can take part irrespective of circumstances. Pupils compete in football matches with some specialist coaching and a rounders club takes place during the summer term.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

79. Pupils at both key stages make satisfactory progress and attain standards that are in line with those expected in the locally agreed syllabus. During Key Stage 1 pupils learn about journeys, special occasions and celebrations. They gain a sound knowledge of Christianity through hearing stories about Jesus. This is developed in Key Stage 2 where pupils increase their understanding of Christianity and learn about Judaism and Sikhism. During Key Stage 2 pupils have good opportunities to apply their literacy skills, for example by writing plays based on New Testament stories. The Old Testament teachings are related to Judaism and comparisons are made with Christianity. Pupils learn to link their knowledge with their own experiences and discuss moral issues in lessons.

80. In the one lesson observed during the inspection, pupils made good progress. Work was well matched to the different age groups and planned well to give an interesting range of responses. For example, Year 5 pupils wrote a story from Lazarus’s point of view and Year 6 “interviewed” the main characters in the story. Past work indicates that religious education is given sufficient emphasis in the curriculum. A variety of approaches are used including discussion, videos and whole class teaching. Work is well planned around themes and related to other subjects where appropriate. For instance,

during a Victorian topic the pupils learnt the catechism and related this to the Lords Prayer. The pupils' knowledge and understanding is enhanced through acts of collective worship which follow well-planned termly themes.